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IT IS EASIER to vote the sanctions to be visited upon Italy than it will be to apply them, but the speed and resolution shown at Geneva in outlining them has surprised even the League's friends, and it has caused great uneasiness in Rome. An arms embargo on Italy and the severance of credit relations between Italy and League states have already been voted by the sanctions committee. Withdrawal of money will be infinitely more effective than the withdrawal of diplomats, about which nothing as yet has been done. The third sanction, interruption of Italian trade, is now open to discussion and, as might be expected, raises more difficulties. Britain, which does not buy many Italian products, would like to see Italian exports paralyzed. France, which does not furnish Italy with raw materials, prefers to have Italy cut off from these supplies. National interests are bound to express themselves in this way, and careful negotiation will be necessary before they are adjusted to the common purpose. Britain, taking the lead, now proposes that all sanctions be ratified by parliaments and governments in League countries by the end of this month. Italian spokesmen pooh-pooh this activity, and doubt that sanctions ever will be effective. But without raw materials and without sufficient exports to finance its purchases or credits to buy them, Italy will begin in a few months to blanch from pernicious anemia. The defection of Austria and Hungary from the united front is not causing much worry in London and Paris. Even German non-cooperation would not necessarily be fatal to the sanctions plans. All these countries can be rationed to receive only normal imports from League countries.

AMERICAN EXPORTERS lost no time in telling the country that they are determined to trade with Italy and hence by implication are oblivious to the desirability of keeping the United States out of war. They did so without tact and utterly without political or social sense. In effect they served notice on Washington that they were not going to heed official advice which was not specifically enforced by law. It has been a practice of the upper level of business men to listen to hints from the government. A word from the State Department that a large financial transaction was not considered desirable has been enough to halt it. Standard Oil recently abandoned its oil concession in Ethiopia because of official opposition. But exporters are smaller fry and have little sense of government. They also have no awareness of public opinion, or they would appreciate that they are pitting themselves against a passionate and unanimous will in this country not to be drawn by trade and financial considerations into a European conflict. Our trade with Italy is no insignificant item; it amounted to $44,000,000 during the first eight months of this year. But though the loss of a large part of it would be a sacrifice, this trade does not represent an inalienable right of exporters, and it will be permitted only if and as the country desires.

IN DECLARING an arms embargo the President took only a first short step toward shutting off from the belligerents the means of making war. Besides extending the embargo as far as is legally possible to include raw materials and munitions "parts," the government should set about the more important and difficult job of stopping the inevitable leaks. During the World War the best efforts of the British government, backed by the fleet, were unable to prevent contraband goods from reaching the Central Powers through the Scandinavian countries. In the present situation our shippers will make equally effective use of loopholes through any country which fails to support sanctions or to set an embargo of its own. Evasion is also facilitated by the lack of accurate and detailed information on exports available here or at Geneva. Scores of economists and political scientists have tried in recent years to get an accurate picture of the international traffic in arms, but they have had to give it up.

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The League of Nations reports on the subject are about 20 per cent accurate, while our own customs classifications conceal most shipments of war materials under vague and confusing terminology. It is, for example, impossible to discover from the official Monthly Summary of Foreign Commerce how much TNT is exported from this country. The item is not even listed and is probably concealed, together with other military chemicals, under "Explosives" or "Chemicals." Unloaded grenades and similar items are generally listed as "Steel Forgings." Classifications like "Machinery —Parts" and "Explosives—Others," with their dominant position in the listings, hide more than they reveal. All of this applies in like measure to the League. Neither its annual reports on the traffic in arms nor its monthly summaries of international trade give a clear picture of arms exports and imports. How are exports of war implements to be prevented or controlled if only the munitions makers know what is shipped and where it goes?

AS WAS EXPECTED the Liberal Party of Canada scored an overwhelming victory in the recent national elections. According to early returns the Conservatives, headed by Premier R. B. Bennett, won only 41 of the 245 seats in the House of Commons, as against 113 in the Parliament which was dissolved on August 15. The Liberals, victorious in 165 of the 233 constituencies thus far reported, seem assured of complete control of the government for the next five years. A few weeks ago it was doubtful whether the Conservatives would obtain sufficient representatives in Parliament to constitute an effective opposition. That they saved themselves from complete obliteration was due in part to the presence of no less than four opposition parties and in part to a recent spectacular rise in the price of wheat, which many farmers attributed to Mr. Bennett's policies. One of the features of the election was the victory of thirteen candidates of the Social Credit Party, a triumph which was made the more remarkable by the fact that they entered the campaign at the last minute. Mr. Stevens's Reconstruction Party, on the other hand, appears to have won only a single seat. The C.C.F., a semi-socialistic party somewhat similar to the farmer-labor movement in this country, also made a disappointing showing with but seven seats. Although there was no sharp line of demarcation between the platforms of the two major parties, the vigorous campaign waged by the three minor parties made the election more interesting and more significant from the standpoint of political education than any other held in this generation.

THE CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN for American interference in Mexican affairs is strengthened by the report of the non-sectarian American Committee on Religious Rights and Minorities, calling for a "strong protest" against a government policy which it declares is aimed at "the extirpation of all religion." Although it admits that "Mexico has a right to develop its reconstruction plans without interference from outside sources," the committee asserts that religious freedom is a "fundamental of civilization superior even to the organic law of any land." Having made this assumption it can easily cite excerpts from Mexican law showing that for seventy-five years deliberate attempts have been made to curtail the influence of the church. The committee is particularly disturbed by the recent regulations prohibiting the teaching of religion to children in the schools, a policy which it claims would bring about the destruction of the Roman Catholic church. Nothing is said, however, regarding the background of the struggle between church and state in Mexico. There is no mention of the wealth which the clergy have obtained through three centuries of exploitation of the Mexican peon, nor is there more than a hint of the church's bitter rear-guard battle, in the name of religion, against every progressive measure introduced by the government in the past twenty-five years. The committee's report, furthermore, takes no account of the striking reversal of policy shown by the Cárdenas government since its victory over Calles in June. The leader of the anti-Catholic faction, Garrido y Canabal, is now in exile, and the Archbishop has returned to Mexico City. As a result the Mexican peon may look forward to many more years of "religious freedom" even though his every effort to obtain a decent standard of life remains thwarted.

SIXTEEN MONTHS after the signing of the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act, the Administration has concluded its sixth tariff pact. Like those that preceded it, the agreement with Colombia tends to accentuate rather than modify the basic maladjustment in American commercial policy. The sole concessions made by the United States—50 per cent reductions in the duty on castor beans, prepared ipecac, and totu balsam—affect only an insignificant portion of American imports, while the promise not to impose a duty on Colombia's chief exports—coffee, bananas, and platinum—is somewhat gratuitous since none of these commodities is produced in the United States and none competes with American products. In return for these rather dubious gains, Colombia has agreed to grant tariff concessions ranging from 16 to 90 per cent on 150 items, or nearly three-fifths of the articles which it imports from this country. Perhaps the best evidence of the tendency of the United States to use its strong commercial position to bludgeon other countries into accepting our terms may be seen in the fact that the three important states which sell more to the United States than they purchase from this country—Cuba, Brazil, and Colombia—are among the few to conclude reciprocity pacts, while not one of our leading customers has, thus far entered into an agreement. Apparently, the United States has not yet learned that no country can hope to profit from its creditor status unless it is prepared to have an import surplus.

THE SHIPPING INTERESTS have again demonstrated their power over the government. After a vicious undercover drive of more than two years, they have succeeded, through their faithful friend Secretary Roper, in ousting Thomas M. Woodward from the Shipping Board Bureau of the Department of Commerce. Woodward has been a subversive influence from the time of his appointment as a vice-president of the Merchant Fleet Corporation in the summer of 1933. His first efforts were directed to pruning out of the bureau the Hoover hold-overs who carried on the Treasury hand-out practices of their former department head, T. V. O'Connor. Next he began vigorously to pry into the construction-loan subsidies—the manner in which they had been granted, their absurdly low interest rates, and the arrears that had piled up. The situation was made worse by indications that Mr. Woodward was not hindering

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Senator Black in his search for data on the subsidy thieveries. Finally, Woodward submitted to Roper a devastating memorandum—described in *The Nation* for July 31, 1935—on transactions involving the old Shipping Board, the International Mercantile Marine, and the United States Lines, and on the then proposed lay-up of the Leviathan. Roper has tried his best to ease Woodward out without openly asking for his resignation. At last he did openly ask for it "for administrative reasons." Woodward refused to budge, demanding cause. With a scandal brewing, the White House hastily took the matter over and appointed Woodward consumers' counsel to the National Bituminous Coal Commission.

MEANWHILE the Post Office Department is making some interesting revelations on the ship-subsidy racket. It is conducting speed tests of vessels which have mail contracts. The ships are divided into six classes of speed, and are paid by the mile on a fixed rate. For example, a ship in Class 5 is certified as being able to make thirteen knots and is paid $4 per nautical mile. A Class 6 ship, of ten knots, is paid $2.50 a mile. It now appears that the Hoover Administration, in classifying ships preliminary to awarding mail contracts, erred on the side of optimism—doubtless to maintain confidence in the American merchant marine. Of the eleven vessels the Post Office Department has so far tested, only three have made their required speeds. The department has announced that for the life of the contracts the over-rated ships will be paid on the basis of the next lower classification. If the other subsidized vessels make a correspondingly poor showing in tests, a large amount will be saved from the $160,000,000 still allotted to the shipping ring. Unfortunately, the penalty for over-rating of speed is not to be retroactive.

THE SPECIAL BRAND of martial law employed in Indiana for dealing with labor difficulties (it was described by Norman Thomas in our issue of September 18) has been upheld by a federal statutory court of three judges, who ruled on October 7 that Governor McNutt was within his rights in declaring martial law in Terre Haute and Vigo County in July when a general strike was in progress in Terre Haute. The court denied the state's plea that the court has no jurisdiction, but it also denied the application of the attorney for the Labor and Socialist Defense Committee for an injunction to restrain the governor from keeping martial law in force. Martial law was used in Indiana before the advent of the present governor—Sullivan County, a coal-mining region, has been under military rule since 1932—but Mr. McNutt of American Legion fame has perfected it. It is a clever invention which looks harmless except to those against whom it is turned. Soldiers are little in evidence. The civil authorities do the work of administering the government, as usual; but they are subordinate at all times to the military. It is not surprising that the strike at the Columbian Enameling and Stamping Company, which led to the general strike, is still in progress. Picketing is allowed one day and not the next; meetings are held or not held at the sweet will of the military; and so far as is known strike-breakers are still entering the factory bearing passes countersigned by the military authority. With the decision of the federal court the issue becomes national. An appeal to the United States Supreme Court is in preparation.

AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD BOY in Lynn, Massachusetts, because his family belongs to a religious sect called Jehovah's Witnesses which denies allegiance to any temporal power, has refused to participate in the flag-salute ceremony which the school board imposes on the pupils once a week. After a fortnight of hysterics, the local authorities, at a loss how to cope with this particular crime, decided that expulsion from school was the only method of dealing with the situation. Under the regulations of our public-school system, their next step will presumably have to be to arrest the boy or his parents for truancy. When City Solicitor Patrick F. Shanahan was asked what effect the failure of the boy to take part in the flag salute had on the class, he said: "It didn't seem to have any serious effect. The children are very young and things went on as usual." This would seem to indicate that the eight-year-olds of Lynn are considerably smarter than their elders, and need be expected to commit thoroughly silly acts only when they grow up. When the American tradition of freedom of worship conflicts with the American tradition of compulsory education, it would seem to be the part of wisdom to say as little about the matter as possible. By making the situation a *cause célèbre,* instead of letting little Carleton Nichols remain quietly in his seat and fix his thoughts on Jehovah while the other children were rapidly enunciating, "I-pledge-allegiance-to-my-flag-and-to-the-republic-for-which-it-stands-etc.," the Lynn school board has got itself into a pretty dilemma, has attracted the attention of all sorts of professional protestants, and is in process of denying to an American citizen the free public schooling to which the law entitles him.

FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS in the air, Miss Amelia Earhart was the recipient last May of a medal presented by General Giuseppe Castroccio, Italian consul general in Chicago. The consul general explained that the presentation was made on behalf of the Italian government, and the reverse of the medal was so inscribed. In August, however, Miss Earhart received a letter from Signor Castroccio explaining that it was all a mistake; the medal had been presented by himself alone as a token of his personal appreciation of Miss Earhart's flying exploits, and the Italian government had had nothing to do with the matter. Miss Earhart naturally replied that under the circumstances she could not accept the honor. The former consul general is now on his way to Brazil, having been mysteriously transferred to a much less desirable post in a far country. One is justified in suspecting that his transfer was a rebuke for his presumption in assuming that a woman who distinguished herself outside the nursery could hope to be rewarded by Mussolini's fascist state. The matter is of small moment, but we recommend to Miss Earhart a story about another medal, which may serve as a guide in possible future embarrassments of the same nature. A German university some years ago presented a medal to the late Dr. William H. Welch of Johns Hopkins, an award for supremely distinguished service that had only once before been given to a living man. Shortly before his death Dr. Welch was requested to return the medal, evidently because he was not a pure (German) Aryan. He replied that he would be only too happy to oblige, but he could not for the life of him think what he had done with the thing. It had been irretrievably mislaid.

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What Does Britain Want?

AN unanswered question overshadows the proceedings at Geneva. Has Great Britain decided that Mussolini must go? If not, an early compromise still may be possible in Ethiopia. Obviously France hopes for compromise. Laval's desire is to reconcile Rome and London. And if there were hints that London was ready to be conciliated, the African war might end on terms worked out between Italy, France, and Britain. But there are as yet no such hints. Under Captain Eden's leadership the League has made surprisingly rapid progress in surveying the field of sanctions, and promises to draw up a workable program much sooner than was considered possible. The sanctions committee already has decided on an arms embargo against Italy and is drawing up the definitions for a credit embargo. It then must choose between laying an embargo on Italian exports and shutting off Italy's foreign supply of raw materials, and may find ways to do both. Italy obviously is taken aback by the progress, and government circles in Rome are aware that the successes so handsomely won in the mountains of northern Ethiopia are not being duplicated on the Geneva front. If the League functions at all well, Italy will have its back to the wall in six months. And then the African adventure will be a tragedy for Mussolini, and perhaps for the fascist state. Rome is asking if this is what London wants, and the same question is being anxiously studied in other capitals. For if Britain has decided that Mussolini must go, it also must have a plan for Europe.

The course of Britain during the past year has not been clear. The Ethiopian crisis did not descend on Europe out of a blue sky. Mussolini had conducted himself tactfully; he had asked Laval about his plans, and Laval had given him his blessing with a bit of advice—that he should go into Ethiopia as the French had gone into Morocco, a district at a time. Mussolini also had asked London, and the British Foreign Office had replied it was not ready to discuss the subject. And then informally the Italians were given much the same advice they had received from Laval. Now when the British Foreign Office says it is not ready to discuss a subject, it means one of two things: either that it is not interested, or that it is very much interested indeed. Mussolini had to decide which the Foreign Office meant. It may cost him a high place in history that he decided wrong. Deluded by the informal advice he received, he thought he could go ahead. And go ahead he did, piling up his military forces and supplies in Eritrea and Somaliland. It is probable that at the time the British were not in fact alarmed by Italy's plans. If the African penetration was to be on a small scale, if it was not too glaringly a defiance of League ethics, and if it did not threaten British interests, London could be complacent. Then something happened. Britain awoke. The whole weight of British strength was poured into the League, and Italy today is isolated. Mussolini now feels that Britain betrayed him—lured him into an adventure and then banged shut the door on his escape. The London version of what happened passes the blame back to Mussolini. London had shrugged its shoulders over a minor colonial penetration. But Mussolini decided he must have a war and must win his foothold in Ethiopia by military conquest. That is, Mussolini, as the British saw him, was suddenly bitten by megalomania, by the disease which one day attacks most dictators. After being a veteran of realistic sobriety he changed into a madman. He was only in the early stages of madness, but the British had to look ahead. What if he won his war in Ethiopia? Were his promises to safeguard British interests in the Lake Tana region any longer reliable? Might he not strike next in the Sudan, and hope to swallow up Egypt? Just as the Japanese had their blueprints for the conquest of China, the Italians have well-defined dreams of empire and of making the Mediterranean their sea. The Roman Empire of the twentieth century and the British Empire could not both survive. The one could rise only on the ruins of the other. These were considerations which rose like specters in London after Mussolini refused the concessions offered him by Britain and France at the Paris conference of July. There Mussolini showed his hand. He did not want only better terms. He wanted a war. The next week the British Cabinet met and fatefully determined to blow life into the League. And since that day the British have methodically and efficiently gone ahead to rally the world to their side. It is in following this sequence of British policy that one comes to Geneva, doubting whether a compromise still is possible, and asking if Britain has not decided that Mussolini must go. Assuming that it has, what sort of Europe does London want?

Here one must examine the agreements so far reached with France. Britain has pledged itself to apply sanctions in the event of any unprovoked aggression. It has told France this holds good for Eastern and Southeastern Europe. But this is not enough for France. What it comes down to is a pledge by Britain to use League machinery to punish violations of the Kellogg pact and the Locarno treaty. It is not a pledge to apply sanctions if the Treaty of Versailles is broken. If Austria voluntarily joined Germany, that would not be unprovoked aggression and the British would not act, even though it was a breach of the Treaty of Versailles. This indicates that the British are not expecting to leave Germany out of the new Europe. Influential British Conservatives have consistently held to the thesis that in German expansion in the East lies the only safety for Europe. Similarly they have frowned on the Franco-Soviet agreement. It may be that they hope to construct a new four-power constellation of Britain, France, Germany, and a chastened Italy, winning France from its friendship with Russia. Such a Europe would on the whole be anti-Soviet. The alternative to this would be a Europe in which Russia was partner in place of Germany, which goes against the prejudices of British Conservatives, now in full command at home. The problem cannot be thus isolated. Japan plays a part in it, for Britain has vast interests to defend in the East. The United States has a part in it, and can hardly be happy if the British, in an anti-Russian orientation, make friends with Japan. Considerations of this scope play about Geneva. The League has been reborn. Britain has assumed world leadership. And no one can say what Britain's world will look like.

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Patriotism

THIS is as good a time as any, while the self-styled patriotic organizations are so busily defending their idea of democracy at the expense of every critic, however mild, of the American status quo, to examine the question of patriotism. The campaign inaugurated by the Lusk committee fifteen years ago has been vociferously carried on by other Congressional investigations, by the Elks, the D. A. R., the American Legion, the National Civic Federation, the American Chamber of Commerce, and most recently by all of them together, with Mrs. Dilling's "Red Network" as their bible. All these groups pursue their activities in the name of Americanism, and a good bit of their rancor is directed against the American Civil Liberties Union as the champion of individuals whose civil rights have been transgressed.

Mr. Roger Baldwin as director of the A. C. L. U. testified before the Fish committee investigating Communist activities in 1930, and his testimony, quoted in a pamphlet entitled "Who's Un-American?" can be recommended to the attention of every patriot. Mr. Baldwin was asked whether or not his organization upheld the right of an American citizen to advocate force and violence for the overthrow of the government.

> MR. BALDWIN. Certainly, in so far as mere advocacy is concerned.
>
> CHAIRMAN. Does it uphold the right of an alien in this country to urge the overthrow and advocate the overthrow of the government by force and violence?
>
> MR. BALDWIN. Precisely on the same basis as any citizen.
>
> CHAIRMAN. That is not your personal opinion?
>
> MR. BALDWIN. That is the organization's position. . . . Also the position of two justices of the Supreme Court.

Asked whether there was any limit to which the organization would not go in permitting an individual to express his ideas and opinions about the government, Mr. Baldwin said there was not. It was the position of the organization that free speech meant simply free speech, liberty to express ideas of any sort so long as they did not include overt acts. The chairman of the committee thereupon asked whether the organization would uphold the right of a citizen or alien to advocate murder or assassination, and finally assassination of the President of the United States.

> MR. BALDWIN. Well, the law, Mr. Fish, on that matter is this—and it has been established for years in Hyde Park, London—you can, in Hyde Park, London, advocate the assassination of kings and be protected by the King's own guards, but you may not advocate the assassination of the King; you may not advocate the direct incitement to commit the specific act, but may advocate the political philosophy of assassination; which is the same as the law in the United States. . . . The people who are going to assassinate governors, or going to overthrow governments, do not talk about it in public. It is purely an academic issue.
>
> CHAIRMAN. They might advocate it.
>
> MR. BALDWIN. They might advocate it; but in ten years' experience, I have never heard of such a case.

This, we believe, is sound Americanism and patriotism of the first order, and Mr. Baldwin is to be commended for having the logic to see it and the courage to state it in public. The Constitution contains a clear and specific definition of treason against the United States. It "shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort." There is not a word about advocacy of treason, and there is no doubt that the framers of the document, having just expended a good deal of time and energy in waging a treasonable war against the government of Great Britain, did not mean to put it there. When we put a man in jail or deport him to the country of his origin for belonging to an organization which advocates the overthrow of the government by force and violence, we are thereby committing an un-American act, and moreover an act which there is no federal law to justify. And it is the right and the duty of every American citizen to see that Congress passes no law which deprives any resident of the United States of this right, which the First Amendment of the Constitution guarantees.

We cannot afford to forget this fact, any more than we can afford to forget that the Civil Liberties Union or any similar organization, when it defends persons who are denied this right, among whom are a fair percentage of Communists, is not thereby functioning as a Communist organization but as one whose Americanism is beyond question.

The Work-Relief Fiasco

TEN months have passed since President Roosevelt announced a program which was to abolish the demoralizing effect of relief and afford security for all Americans. Politically, the move was a brilliant piece of strategy. Conservatives were assured of the elimination of their *bête noir,* the "dole," while liberals were impressed by the sweep of the security proposals. The program also had the advantage of simplicity: all the permanent hazards of modern life were to be provided for by an omnibus program of social insurance; the immediate problem of indigency was to be eliminated by putting all the 3,500,000 "employable" jobless to work on useful tasks; and the 1,500,000 "unemployables" were to be passed back to the states. It is true that even at the time certain writers had the temerity to point out that there were 11,000,000 unemployed, so that at best the President's program would only aid about 30 per cent of the casualties of the depression. But these unfavorable comments were lost in the flood of approval of the Administration's bold project.

We are not concerned at the moment with the grave weaknesses of the security program as it was eventually enacted. It is sufficient to point out that only a handful of states have adopted legislation which will permit them to benefit by the federal unemployment-insurance law, and that in no state, with the exception of Wisconsin, will there be any payment of unemployment benefits for at least two years. The emergency old-age pensions cannot start until money is appropriated by the Seventy-fifth Congress. Meanwhile, what has happened to the bold program for caring for today's jobless? The snow flurries heralding another winter have come, but the President has found work for only a small

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fraction of the 3,500,000 "employables" which he promised to have engaged in socially useful work by November 1. No report is available for the last week, but on October 3 the total number of persons employed on federal work-relief projects was only 1,126,234, of which 559,640 were in the CCC. With less than a month to go before the widely publicized deadline, the WPA had on its rolls only 452,739 of the 2,900,000 men which it promised to have at work by the time direct relief terminated. Only four states have received sufficient funds to carry out their assigned quotas. Yet of the 1,560,000 persons at work on FERA projects on June 20, only 590,000 were still employed on September 19, and total expenditures for relief for the three months ending October 1 were only two-thirds as great as last year.

The drop in relief expenditures is in part accounted for by improved conditions in the drought regions of the Middle West. But it also reflects the Administration's intention of throwing the burden of relief back on the local communities as rapidly as this can be accomplished. Already six states have ceased to receive federal relief, and only $100,000,000 of the $4,880,000,000 work-relief budget is still available for direct relief. In some instances the state governments are fully prepared to take over the care of the persons dropped by the federal relief agencies, but in many cases the burden will be shifted to the same local authorities that showed themselves unable to cope with the problem two years ago.

An elementary knowledge of arithmetic is all that is required to show the inadequacy of the aid which is to be extended under the WPA. The amount which it is expected will be spent by this agency before July 1, 1936, has been officially set at $1,150,000,000. This includes the necessary expenditures for tools, materials, and supervision. Dividing this sum by 2,900,000—on the assumption that the entire amount is to go to labor—we find that the average wage for WPA workers for the eight-to-nine-month period will be approximately $395! How many "employables" on relief will remain unprovided for by any phase of the Administration's program has not even been estimated, but in New York City alone the number has been set at between 150,000 and 160,000.

Perhaps the most ominous indication of the disintegration of the President's program is the decision that, beginning with November 1, federal transient relief will be definitely discontinued. Of all the groups in the population standing in need of an urgent, constructive relief program, it would seem that the transients have the preeminent claim to attention. So far only a handful of the 13,000 transients on the New York relief rolls have been provided jobs with the WPA, and warning is issued that there will be no funds available to care for the thousands who will come during the winter months. It is easy to say, as General Johnson is reported to have said, that these persons would be better off if they remained at home. But the great majority of these men and women are literally without a place which they can call home. Responsibility for their rehabilitation rests clearly with the federal government. Its failure to assume the responsibility at this crisis suggests that the difficulties at Washington are not due solely to red tape and inefficiency. The fine social consciousness which characterized the early days of the New Deal appears to have faded along with that much-maligned institution—the Brain Trust.

Little Orphan Annie

LITTLE Orphan Annie, that none-too-bright child of the daily comic strip, is the latest victim of the sinister activity known as boring from within. It all began some weeks ago when the financial genius Oliver Warbucks, Annie's benefactor, who time and again through the marvelous opportunities that grow on American trees has risen from rags to riches, decided out of the greatness of his heart to make available to the masses a wonderful substance called eonite. Eonite was the discovery of a mad wizard named Eli Eon who cared for neither money nor glory, and it was so powerful that it would do anything from parking the car to putting out the cat. Oliver Warbucks headed the company which was to make the inventor's dream a reality and he was determined that eonite should not fall into unscrupulous hands. He was content to make a fair profit and let the public be the chief benefactor. He built model factories and insisted upon ideal working conditions for his employees.

At this point the villains appear upon the scene—three dirty-bearded gentlemen who would be immediately recognized by a shipowner in San Francisco as New York labor racketeers from Moscow. They succeed in getting jobs at the factory and begin to b. f. w. They organize a union among the foolishly contented workers, collect large initiation fees and dues, and demand from the long-suffering Warbucks ever shorter hours and fabulously higher wages. They are, in truth, the tools of a political hireling of the arch-villain Slugg, who wants to seize control of eonite for his own profit. In a particularly thrilling episode the "loyal" workers tar and feather the "agitators" and drive them out. But this is not the end. Claude Claptrap, the petty politician, incites a mob, telling them that eonite belongs to the "pee-pul" and not only to Mr. Warbucks, and in the ensuing melee the factory is attacked. But Warbucks is not bitter. He refuses to let the National Guard—which has already mobilized, you can bet—and his private police use tear gas to disperse the mob. Instead, placing human rights above property rights, he forbids the soldiers to fire—and the mob destroys the factory. It all shows clearly what happens when employers try to improve the lot of the workers.

Fortunately Little Orphan Annie was not hurt in this tragic episode. She was in fact out of the picture during the whole time, though the caption above the strip continued to bear her name: Little Orphan Annie—By Harold Gray—the Three Mus-keeters (Isn't it a *scream?*). At the moment she is once more pursuing her innocent if stupid activities. But who knows what will happen to the child next? Perhaps the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children should take her under its control until Mr. Gray can draw better and until her syndicators, Hearst and the Chicago *Tribune,* can demonstrate their moral fitness to be the guardians of a child as impressionable and dull as Annie. But the more immediate question is whether such a respectable family newspaper as the liberal Baltimore *Sun* should allow the outfit to run loose in its pages. At least two of its readers have become so bored from within that they have complained to *The Nation* about it.

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Issues and Men

The War and the Pacifists

BITTERLY discouraging as the needless and useless bloodshed in Abyssinia is, I still cannot feel that anybody who knows that it is wrong to take human life need be too downcast by this fresh outbreak of war. On the contrary, there are many encouraging signs that we in America are now far removed from the gullibility and the ignorance and the stupidity that made it possible for the propagandists and the bankers to put us into war in 1917. In the first place, Mussolini's crime is so crass and so obvious that no one is being misled by any talk of Italy's needing "her place in the sun"—how sadly reminiscent that is of the German propaganda in 1914!—and the necessity of civilizing a barbarous people. That doesn't go down in 1935. Pirandello and other defenders of the noble Mussolini may plead with Americans to side with the Italians all they please, not ¼ of 1 per cent of the American populace will do so, excluding persons of Italian birth or ancestry, and a lot of these are too sensible to be swayed merely by their former national allegiance. Abroad the overwhelming determination of the British people that there shall be collective control of berserker nations is one of the most heartening things in the whole picture. Yet they do not want war, those eleven millions who voted in Lord Robert Cecil's referendum of last spring, and they will keep their country out of war if they possibly can. They are the answer to Frank Simonds's recent letter to *The Nation,* which takes the point of view that there is nothing in this whole situation except the determination of the imperialist powers to hold on to what they have and the desire of those powers that are without colonial possessions to obtain them. Public opinion is aroused in England because it knows that if this business of war cannot be stopped it is going to be the end of everything. If Mussolini cannot be checked now, Hitler cannot be when he decides to set the world on fire.

My "hopeless and incurable optimism," as some of my critics and friends describe it, is further reinforced by what is happening in the United States. During the war-time mania of 1917-19 I never dreamed that I should live to see the time when public opinion in the United States would be practically united in recognizing that we were lied and deceived into going to war, and that it was a great disaster out of which we got nothing; and when Congress would actually proceed to put a stop to those processes by which Wilson, House, Lansing, and J. P. Morgan and Company brought us into the war. Only yesterday I read a book review in the New York *Times* in which one of the staff writers was practically allowed to say that the House of Morgan's helping to get the United States into the war and its helping the Allies to win "were 'achievements' in a sense, but in the light of subsequent history they were not achievements of the sort to win this nation's unmitigated gratitude." Robert L. Duffus, who wrote that, would hardly have been allowed to utter such a treasonable sentence in the *Times* even five years ago. I do not lay so much stress upon the President's declaration that the United States will not be drawn into a war, because, after all, he is at bottom a politician, and he would yield to the bankers and to public clamor and take the advice of a muddle-headed and incompetent old gentleman like Colonel House as readily as did Wilson. But the spirit of Congress fills me with amazement and joy. Here is an interview with Senator Frederick Van Nuys of Indiana, serving notice on Roosevelt that Congress next year will make the neutrality laws, which it passed contrary to the President's wishes, as "ironclad as legislation can make them so that under no conditions could any President . . . bring war upon the United States without Congress playing a part." He also declared that the embargo act will be made more stringent at the next session of Congress, by which I hope he means that next January Congress will make it absolutely impossible for American bankers and industrialists to do again what they did in 1918, aided by the shortsighted man in the White House and his Cabinet, with the admirable exception of William Jennings Bryan. It is not only that this spirit is abroad in the land that is so heartening, but that it is a *militant* spirit—so militant that it will not allow the President or any successor to have discretion in this matter.

I have just listened to the radio speech of a reserve army officer. Of course he talked the professional bunk about adequate preparedness, when neither he nor any other living man can say what constitutes military preparedness, since no one can tell if we are going into the war business what enemies we shall have, how many, or in what quarters of the globe. But the astounding thing to me was that he told his great audience that everybody understood now that we had been put into the war in 1917 because "English propaganda was more effective than German propaganda." Why, a lot of us nearly went to jail in 1917 and 1918 for saying that very thing. More than that, this speaker went on to call upon his audience to believe not one single word of the war stories from either side and to close their minds to atrocity propaganda. Then I must not forget to recall to my readers that extraordinarily useful and truthful book of Walter Millis's, "Road to War." No one can read that volume and not be convinced. It is an absolute justification of the pacifist position. A few years ago it would not have seemed possible that such a book could be written and widely circulated.

Finally, we have the President's orders forbidding the export of munitions and warning Americans that if they travel on the ships of belligerent nations in war time they do so at their own risk. What a marvelous advance! A similar proclamation in 1915—the one that William J. Bryan begged for, and for which he was derided and vilified—would have kept this country out of the World War. Disheartened? No, indeed; how could anybody be?

Oswald Garrison Villard

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The New Stepfather

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Can Italy Avert Bankruptcy?

By MAXWELL S. STEWART

ITALY'S economic status presents a paradox which at first sight seems to defy logical explanation. On the one hand, there is abundant evidence that the country is undergoing a financial crisis more grave than any since the Black Shirt march on Rome in 1922. Yet in the face of this stringency, and presumably because of it, Mussolini has launched a costly and hazardous adventure in Ethiopia which cannot fail to impose a tremendous strain on the national economy. Are we to assume from this that Il Duce has a secret war chest hidden away for just such an emergency? Or is there some alchemy by which governments at war can transmute their debits into gold? Short of such a miracle, is there any way in which Italy can meet the cost of a protracted war?

The basic economic difficulties of Italy long antedate Mussolini's seizure of power, but they have been greatly increased by his nationalistic policies. Although half of its population is engaged in agriculture, Italy has long been dependent on foreign countries for a considerable part of its food supply. Lacking coal, iron, and other mineral resources, its industry has remained relatively undeveloped because of the high cost of imported raw materials. To these permanent handicaps have been added the problems created by the revaluation of the lira at a higher point than was consistent with Italy's economic position, and the catastrophic effects of the world crisis. At the opening of this year Italy had a larger number of unemployed in proportion to its industrial population than any other country in the world except the United States; its workers had suffered a series of reductions in wages and salaries without a corresponding decline in the cost of living; and the nation as a whole had been saddled with a burden of taxation which was only exceeded by that of Great Britain.

One of the symptoms of Italy's growing financial weakness is to be found in its mounting budget deficits. Before the depression the Italian budget balanced at about twenty billion lire annually. But in 1931 revenues began to fall off, while expenditures increased. The deficit averaged 3,600,000,000 lire for the two fiscal years ending June 30, 1933; in 1933-34 it was nearly seven billion lire; and despite rigorous economy measures it exceeded two billion lire in 1934-35. Official estimates place the deficit for the current year at 1,700,000,000 lire, excluding the extraordinary expenditures necessitated by the Ethiopian campaign. Although new taxes have been imposed, the decrease in revenues has been most noticeable in the yield of direct and consumption levies. Increased expenditures have been due in part to emergency measures necessitated by the depression, such as direct financial assistance to industry, and in part to war preparations. The outlay for the latter has jumped enormously in the past year. Approximately 21 per cent of the total 1934-35 budget was allotted to the upkeep of the army, navy, and air force, while an additional two billion lire was appropriated for a naval and aircraft building program extending over the next two or three years. As a result of accumulated deficits the public debt has risen to more than 150 billion lire, an increase of 35 per cent since 1922.

Compared with the national debt of the United States or Great Britain, this may not seem alarming. But Italy is a poor country. Although its area is only about twice that of New England, its population is five times as large and is steadily mounting. Its mineral resources are more limited than those of any other first-rank power, and owing to the mountainous character of the country not more than 60 per cent of its soil is capable of cultivation.

Mussolini has always dreamed of the possibility of making Italy self-sufficient in food—presumably as a protection against isolation in war time. As early as 1926 he launched his first "battle of wheat" with a view to increasing Italy's production of essential foodstuffs. Although both the area devoted to cereals and the yield per acre have been increased by this campaign, the gain has scarcely kept pace with the growth in population. Moreover, since the new wheat has been relatively more expensive to produce, it has been necessary to restrict the importation of foreign grain by quotas and prohibitive tariff rates. Thus the battle of wheat has helped to increase the cost of living during a period when wages and salaries were steadily declining.

Few countries could have been more unfitted than Italy for the Fascist program of economic nationalism. In order to encourage industry, Mussolini raised tariffs on industrial as well as agricultural products. He attempted to develop hydroelectric power in order to reduce the country's dependence on imported coal. The day of reckoning came in the early days of the depression when other countries were forced to adopt similar nationalistic tactics. Prior to 1930 Italy had experienced no great difficulty in meeting its normal adverse balance of trade because of the volume of its invisible imports—remittances from Italian emigrants and the expenditures of foreign tourists in Italy. As the crisis developed, however, these items were among the first to be curtailed by foreign restrictions, and Italy was obliged to seek other means of paying for its necessary imports. This task was made more difficult by the fact that even the most drastic reduction in prices would not permit the principal export industries—silk, rayon, and cotton—to compete on equal terms with Japanese exports, which had the advantage of a depreciated currency. In order to preserve these industries and at the same time maintain the gold value of the lira, Mussolini has resorted to direct subsidies while attempting to impose deflation by decree.

The brunt of the government's deflationary program has fallen on the urban population. It has been felt the more keenly because the revaluation of the lira in 1927 imposed wage cuts of 10 to 20 per cent which were not offset by similar reductions in the cost of living. Although Mussolini later agreed to permit this wage reduction to be restored as soon as industrial conditions permitted, the industries were easily able to demonstrate the impracticability of such increases. A study by the International Labor Office showed that in 1930 Italian wages were the lowest in Europe, being 60 per cent below the British level and 80 per cent

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below the American. Government-inspired wage cuts during the depression have aggravated this already serious situation. According to official statistics, hourly earnings in industry for March, 1935, were 19 per cent below the 1930 level, as against a 20 per cent decline in the cost of living during the same interval. Actually, however, the status of the wage-earner was more unfavorable than these figures indicate, because in the same period there had been a 10 per cent reduction in the working week. If the 1927 cuts are taken into account, real wages have declined from 15 to 20 per cent in the past eight years.

While other countries have enjoyed a measure of recovery in the past two years, Italy's position has drifted from bad to worse. Throughout the whole depression, when nearly all the leading countries of the world were being forced to depreciate their currencies, Italy clung tenaciously to gold. In August, 1931, the Bank of Italy had a gold coverage of 53.4 per cent, the legal minimum being 40 per cent. By the end of 1934, after the abandonment of the gold standard in the United States, it declined to the dangerously low point of 41.2 per cent. Between December 10, 1934, and February 28, 1935, the bank lost an additional two billion lire in gold. As the clouds of war deepened over Ethiopia, withdrawals continued until the government was compelled, late in July, to abandon the statutory requirement of 40 per cent coverage. At the same time an import monopoly was set up for coal, coke, copper, tin, and nickel, and the importation of unnecessary commodities was restricted or prohibited altogether. A few days later a decree was promulgated making it compulsory for Italian citizens living in Italy to surrender all foreign securities in their possession. In spite of these precautions, gold has continued to flow out, and according to the most recent report the reserve ratio is now less than 30 per cent.

The gravity of such a situation for a country embarking on a war of unknown proportions and faced with the certainty of League financial and commercial sanctions is readily apparent. Italy must somehow continue to import large supplies of raw materials if it is to maintain even its normal industrial activity, to say nothing of meeting the swollen demands of its munitions industries. In normal times it needs at least twelve million tons of foreign coal annually, from 60,000 to 70,000 tons of copper, 100,000 tons of manganese, 500,000 tons of petroleum products, two million quintals of cotton, and at least a million tons of scrap and other steel. In addition it must now charter an increasing number of foreign ships to provide supplies and reinforcements for its troops in Africa and it must meet the high toll charges of the Suez Canal. There are only four possible ways in which foreign exchange may be obtained for these purposes: (1) by increasing the export of Italian goods; (2) by rendering new and additional services to foreigners; (3) by shipping gold; and (4) by obtaining foreign loans or credits.

Sanctions or no sanctions, all four of these channels appear to be hopelessly blocked. The recent spectacular rise in Italian wholesale prices—aggregating nearly 15 per cent since January—will make it increasingly difficult for Italy's exports to compete on the world market, while the demands of war will decrease the volume of available goods. Shipping, which is one of the principal services rendered by Italy to foreigners, is bound to be curtailed because of the need of transporting troops to East Africa; and it is most unlikely that either immigrant remittances or tourist traffic will increase during the period of hostilities. Italy still has about 4,500,000,000 lire in gold and foreign exchange, but since the bank-note circulation has doubled in the past twelve months this amount is now inadequate for domestic monetary purposes. And in view of the country's desperate financial plight, the fourth avenue for obtaining funds appears also to be definitely closed. Quite apart from any action taken by the League, London, New York, and Paris some time ago put up their shutters to Italian borrowers because of the risk involved. The Johnson act also stands in the way of a long-term loan in the United States, and as long ago as July the Export-Import Bank refused a short-term credit to cover the export of American cotton. Italy can, of course, continue to borrow on the home market for the purpose of financing its domestic war costs, but all the lire in the world will be of no value unless Il Duce finds some way of solving the exchange problem.

Under these circumstances even the mildest of sanctions become a serious threat to the Italian economy. A boycott that reduced Italy's export trade by only 10 or 20 per cent might prove fatal, while any effective restriction of its power to obtain raw materials would weaken its entire industrial fabric. The enforcement of an embargo on loans and credits by the great powers would make it practically impossible for any country, no matter how friendly to Italy, to furnish any substantial amount of needed supplies. The best that Mussolini can hope for is limited bootleg trade on a strictly cash basis—and that only as long as his gold holds out.

It would be an error, however, to assume from this analysis that Il Duce is likely to be easily dissuaded from his conquest of Ethiopia. On the contrary, the very seriousness of Italy's economic plight appears to be the main factor driving him on. It is not only a matter of creating a diversion to draw popular attention from rising taxes and declining living standards. If prestige alone were at stake, the easy victory at Adowa should have sufficed. That it has not indicates that Mussolini is staking everything on the hope that Ethiopia's untold resources will furnish the solution to Italy's economic dilemma. With Ethiopia in its hands, Italy could probably attain self-sufficiency in cotton. Haile Selassie's domain is also known to contain gold, platinum, iron, coal, and copper and is reputed to be rich in oil. While it is by no means certain that its mineral resources could be profitably exploited for export, Mussolini seems to be convinced of this possibility, and costly though the adventure may be, he apparently sees no other solution. Italy must have raw materials, not only for war but for peace-time purposes. Credit is impossible while his armies are in Ethiopia, but there is no evidence that it could have been obtained even if he had capitulated to the League. War involved a grave risk, but at least it offered a possible way out.

The question of how long Italy can hold out in the face of a serious shortage of foodstuffs and raw materials is for the psychologist rather than the economist to answer. The Great War illustrated the extent to which people will suffer deprivation in the name of patriotism. Fortitude, however, has its limits, and no amount of sacrifice will do more than postpone the final reckoning. If the League and the United States hold firm in denying Italy access to the money marts of the world, Mussolini will need his miracle.

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Take the Army Out of the CCC

By RAYMOND GRAM SWING

Washington, October 14

THE CCC has become the bright jewel of the New Deal. At the beginning, the fact that the army was in it aroused alarm, for the camps looked like the nucleus of a fascist militia. While here and there individual mistakes and local circumstances have made camps unpopular, on the whole the CCC is liked throughout the breadth of the land, and deservedly so. The military element has shown laudable restraint. The idea of giving unemployed young men healthy outdoor work under camp routine has won enthusiastic approval. As a form of relief the CCC has avoided the pitfalls of other relief agencies. And conservation has been both furthered and publicized. It was inevitable that an experiment which turned out successfully should be placed on a permanent basis. And now the decision to give the CCC a regular status in American life has been made. The President has announced it, and the Administration will have a definite program to lay before Congress early next year. After it has been announced, no doubt there will be a brief public discussion, but the CCC is worth careful thought, and both the Administration and Congress will benefit if the country begins the debate sooner.

Obviously the first bone of contention is the place of the army in a permanent CCC. The army played a vital role in establishing the camps. It built and equipped the barracks, and it has fed, clothed, and transported the men and been responsible for discipline. Otherwise the camps could hardly have had so great a success. Yet that is not an argument for continuing the army in the organization. When the CCC work was first conceived, the government had no agency other than the army which had the experience, organization, and equipment to get the new experiment under way rapidly. In the main that work is now finished. More than enough camps have been built. The clothing and feeding of the men is now routinized. The only arguments for continuing the cooperation of the army are that it can manage the physical safety so much better than any other agency that it should be given the task for all time; and that the discipline imposed by army officers is more desirable than any other kind.

No one will deny that the army runs a commissariat on a large scale and operates with central purchasing facilities, and in both is competent and economical. A permanent CCC, however, knowing in advance the requirements of 200,000 young men, could also establish itself on an efficient basis. Whatever economies the army is able to maintain, the CCC by itself either could equal or at least come close to, so that the savings of any army administration would be insubstantial.

Discipline at present is in the hands of the reserve officer in command at each camp. His powers over his 200 workers are strictly limited. He can assess fines up to $3 a month, assign men to distasteful work, or dismiss them from the camp (whereupon their families lose their relief). He is supreme in the camp. A young man charged with breaking discipline is given a "hearing" at what really is a summary trial. He is entitled to be represented by a colleague and he has an appeal to a district officer and finally to the corps area commander.

It is obvious that the only arguable advantage from having an army officer in charge is the prestige the army may enjoy with members of the camp or the fear it may inspire. If the workers are recruited from the sidewalks of a congested city, it may be thought that the hard-headed youngsters will be impressed by a uniform which represents the entire United States army. But these young men know that the whole United States army is not in fact embodied in their commanding officer. He is only a reservist; he was—almost certainly—out of a job when the camp saved him. And he has very narrow powers. The worst penalty he can inflict is not very serious. His most telling sanction is economic, expulsion from camp, which means the loss of relief to the family at home. And this has nothing to do with things military. Discipline in the camps has been well or badly enforced, according to the individuality of officers; immeasurably more of it has been good than bad. But where it has been good, it has been so because the officer was capable, not because he was an officer. Here and there an officer has had a superiority complex and has demanded cringing respect from those in his charge. Though he is not allowed to require saluting, mass formation, or drill, there are ways for him to make himself obnoxious. But on the whole the disciplinary problem has been admirably handled, to the great credit of the army and the reserve officers. The army gave its pledge to the President that the camps should not be militarized and they have not been. But there is no reason why equally good discipline should not be possible under equally capable men unconnected with the army. If left to itself the CCC probably would give appointments to many of the present camp commanders who have demonstrated their personal fitness for the work.

From the army standpoint, then, the two arguments do not come to much. The army can administer economically —this must be granted—but the savings would not be considerable. It has maintained effective discipline—which also must be conceded—but where the discipline has been good it has been non-military, a poor reason for continuing it as an army feature. So the advantage of keeping the army in the CCC boils down to the very slight savings presumably possible under army administration.

Against this can be set the folly of giving the army permanent control over 200,000 civilians of military age. Some army officers may be eager for this control, recognizing it as an easy method of obtaining army recruits. Others with longer vision may see the CCC as a potential army reserve. What if the country has not wanted a semi-civilian army reserve, with the militarization it implies? Here is a way to get it by round-about. These elements are nothing like a majority in the army, and fortunately they are not a dominating minority. The real army leaders, it can be said on excellent authority, do not care to keep control over the CCC, will be relieved to get out of it; they feel that they have done

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an emergency job well, that they deserve credit for it, and that the emergency ends when the CCC is made permanent. If the camps want to have the advantage of the army's central purchasing system and commissariat, then army discipline would also have to be retained, for the army's prestige is involved; it isn't going to stay on as cook and tailor, and relinquish discipline to civilians, as though it had fallen down on that part of the job.

The army as a whole, then, can be expected to get out of the CCC gracefully, even gratefully. There is a movement to make one well-known corps commander head of the new permanent organization. This, however, is not backed in high quarters, and would only have the support of persons who would like to see the CCC developed as a militarized youth movement, along semi-fascist lines. However, it is for such personal ambitions that the public must watch out if the CCC is not assured a strictly non-military future.

The second fundamental issue to be decided is the purpose of the CCC as a permanent government agency. So far it has been a happy accident, a relief project with a wide ramification of benefits and no ill effects. It has brought town and city boys into the forests, it has built up their undernourished bodies and strengthened their characters, it has provided cash for their parents. Also it has made a great deal of urgent conservation work possible. In a permanent CCC one plan under consideration is not to confine the camps to young men whose families are on relief. If this is carried out, the first purpose of the camps will cease to be relief. It then can be conservation. And if it becomes conservation, there can be no question who should have full responsibility for it. It would belong to the Forestry Service. The camps could continue to work untold benefits for the young men who lived in them, and in a large number of cases needy families could continue to draw financial benefits. But the camps themselves would have one primary purpose, to develop and protect the natural resources of the country. If 200,000 young men pass through the camps every two years, in ten years a million young men would be educated conservationists, and in a few decades we should have a nation which for the first time was conservation-wise. That would mean that the American people at last had grown out of the piratical economy by which they spread over the continent.

The Forestry Service has the right spirit to head a permanent CCC. Its personnel is about as non-political as any that a modern democracy can produce, and its men work on ludicrously low salaries with the greatest zeal. They are imbued with the religion of conservation. No better esprit de corps is to be found and no more honest or capable administration. So if the CCC is to be dedicated to conservation, the Forestry Service is eminently fitted to govern and guide it. Under the current doctrine that things federal must be handled through state units, there might be some delay in certain districts in creating suitable subordinate state forest services. But the foresters are able to take over the entire work as soon as Congress can give it to them.

To reduce the cost of the CCC, the amount of relief now paid probably will have to be reduced, and the existing relief basis may be radically changed. At present each camp worker receives $30 a month in cash, after his board, lodging, and clothing have been provided. He keeps $5 for himself; the remaining $25 is paid to his family. This makes each camp cost $6,000 a month in cash, and probably another $8,000 in upkeep and administration. The latter items cannot be much reduced. But Congress may be asked to cut the relief cost by half, every camper to receive $15 a month, and to dispose of the whole sum himself. With this change may also come new eligibility rules, and the camps may be opened to young men whether their families are on relief or not. In this event the CCC camps will become similar to the labor camps of Germany, which make a deliberate effort to bring about a mingling of classes on a footing of equality. And in America a good many upper- and middle-class families with unemployed sons on their hands will urge them to go into the CCC.

If there is a good side to this, there also is a danger that the camps will be asked to absorb a large number of grown-up problem children. Hardly a camp exists which has not been bedeviled by parents whose sons "need the discipline of camp supervision and the healthy outdoor life." These young men have been refused because their parents were not on relief. If too large a group of youngsters of this kind comes into the camps, heaven alone can help the Forest Service, or whoever has the responsibility. The idea that young men can be made over in short order may have been fondly entertained at the beginning of the CCC, but it certainly has been modified. Nearly all the campers have improved under the humane treatment, excellent food, and regular hours of this life. The average gain in weight in some camps runs as high as eight to ten pounds. But city boys from slum streets with slum standards have not been transformed into perfect citizens. I know of a camp where the New York boys quite naturally set up their own gangs. One fellow established a dice monopoly, and maintained it by strong-arm methods. Most of the boys of this camp went to New York on their week-end leaves. A group with relations at home operating motor trucks established a weekly service at low rates. Another group tried to bring in another set of relations to cut in on the business. The second group was warned there would be war, but the competing truck duly arrived. It was met, captured, and now lies at the bottom of a nearby lake. Gangster "civilization" is not to be rooted out by a few months of work in the woods.

In a permanent CCC the present somewhat extemporized system of education will need overhauling. I visited a camp where the education officer had as his room a stuffy little space filled with cast-off school desks. Nothing could have been more forbidding to young men than the mere appearance of that room. Only a supervisor with rare personal attractiveness and tact could hope to interest his young men there, and the teacher ruefully admitted his real chance came in winter when it was too cold for outdoor sport. Perhaps the word "education" will have to be dropped altogether. Someone should be there to give guidance in the wise use of free time since camp life is divided into three parts, eight hours a day for work, eight for sleep, and eight for leisure. But vocational training with an immediate economic objective must rank first if the camps are to succeed in fitting young men to find jobs. In many camps this already is the focus. In a permanent system the opportunity to expand in this direction is almost limitless. But the greatest objective is not education, it is not relief, it is conservation. And a permanent CCC would be the finest practical university of elemental social economy ever established in this country.

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Scratched

By HEYWOOD BROUN

I THINK that one of the most useful kinds of protest that can be made against the fascist regime of Hitler lies in our staying away from the Olympic games in Berlin next year. Boycotts of one sort or another have certain dangers. I will admit that I have changed my mind in regard to organizations of Americans pledged not to buy German goods. In the beginning I opposed it. I still feel that it is a blunderbuss kind of targetry. Some will be hit against whom the charge of anti-Semitism doesn't lie.

But in the case of the Olympic games a decision can be made by the American people themselves. It really is a gesture from the masses of one country to the masses of another. It isn't feasible, of course, to hold a national referendum on the question in an official way, but I am very strongly for straw votes in various sections of the country in order to demonstrate that the withdrawal of our team is an act based upon the approval of citizens in general. I think that magazines, newspapers, and radio stations might well notify their clients to vote on the issue.

As a matter of fact, I made a short test myself over Station WOR. I took a few minutes one night to explain the reasons which seem to me sufficient to justify our keeping an American team away, and then I asked for a postcard poll of simple "Yes" and "No." A great deal of mail came in. In fact, there were more than a thousand letters within the first few days. When the limit of time was up I tabulated the returns and, as I remember, they ran, roughly, something like 1,900 against sending our athletes to Berlin to 100 in favor of it.

Unfortunately I wasn't able to shut off the votes after the date set for the closing of the poll; they are still coming in and running 99 per cent or more in the negative. It has been a little disturbing to me because, like every other radio performer, I like to hear from my public, if any, and I have gone down on certain evenings to the station to find quite a sizable stack of mail waiting for me. And on such occasions I have thought to myself, "Ah, there are people somewhere who liked the little chatty discourse I gave last night on 'Old Days in American Vaudeville.'" Then I started to open the envelopes and found nothing at all except "In my opinion we should not send a team to the Olympics in Germany this year." Apparently I have never said anything on the air in any other discourse which caught and held a single ear.

Indeed, the issue seems to grow slightly confused in some quarters. I've had four or five indignant letters from radio fans saying, "I understand you are conducting a vote as to whether or not we should be represented in the next Olympics. Haven't you got sufficient strength of character to make up your own mind on this point without waiting to use a vote?"

Of course the answer is the simple one that nobody has left it to me, personally, to make the decision. I made up my mind quite a while ago and said so. But if this protest is to be made, it ought of course to be a mass protest. Moreover, I quite agree with the suggestion that in addition to keeping our Olympic team from Berlin we should undertake to find some other place where the games could be held. Some place where there was no trace of anti-Semitism whatsoever.

I wish it were possible that America might assume the role of host and say to the athletes of the world, "Come here for your competition, to America, the land of liberty, the melting pot, the place of refuge for all people. Here the youth of the world can compete in sportsmanship and amity. With us the best mile runner is the best mile runner regardless of any question of race or religion or political point of view."

I wish we could say that. Now it is true that anti-Semitism in America has no such official indorsement as it receives in Germany. Race and religious prejudice here is on an economic foundation. Anti-Semitism here manifests itself in many subtle ways, and in some which are perfectly palpable. Nobody can deny the use of a quota system in very many of our schools and colleges. By now the so-called psychological test is recognized as a pure fraud to limit Jewish enrolment.

Certainly no doctor can deny that our largest medical schools quite obviously get away from any competitive test in scholastic ranking and choose to take poorer students in many cases if they happen to be Gentiles. And after graduation there are a great many hospitals to which a Jewish interne is never admitted. Those which let down the bars at least make entrance difficult. The Jewish applicant for an internship has to be at least 50 per cent better than his nearest Gentile competitor.

A surgeon said to me once, "But if we made no attempt at curtailment, if we based admission wholly on scholarship, then all our students would be Jewish." If Aryan superiority rests upon nothing more than fraudulent psychological tests, it seems to me that the anti-Semites have no leg on which to stand.

I may say frankly for myself, as an old hypochondriac who is a perfect sucker for doctors, that the physician's race or religion is no concern of mine.

When I get sick I want somebody who's smart enough to cure me.

[The Labor and Industry Section of *The Nation* is omitted from this issue because of the pressure of space. It will appear as usual next week. The following articles, among others, are scheduled for early issues:

A. J. MUSTE will discuss the proceedings and significance of the recent convention of the American Federation of Labor.

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD, who is attending the Mooney hearings now in progress in California, will present a full report of one political prisoner's latest fight for justice.

KATHERINE GAY will contribute a first-hand report of the dramatic trial now going on in Aztec, New Mexico, where ten workers are on trial for their lives.]

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Traffic in Kings

By M. W. FODOR

Vienna, October 1

IN the years 1917 and 1918 three mighty and ancient dynasties lost their thrones: the Romanovs in Russia, the Hohenzollerns in Germany, and the Hapsburgs in Austria. The Sultan of Turkey shared the same fate only a few years later, and George II of Greece was driven into exile in 1923. The list of departing monarchs was closed by the resignation of King Alfonso XIII of Spain in April, 1931. The king by hereditary right has given way to another figure—the dictator, risen from the lower ranks of the population. In the period since the war only one event has been opposed to the anti-monarchist wave: the new Republic of Albania, established in 1925, changed to a monarchy in 1928 when its president, Achmed Zogu, became king under the name of Zog I.

Movements for a restoration of the monarchy are now apparent, however, in Greece, Austria, and Hungary. Indeed, the king's return to the throne appears to be imminent in Greece, where the question of monarchy or republic has poisoned political life for the past twenty years.* The root of the trouble goes back to the war years, when Premier Eleutherios Venizelos, one of the outstanding figures of modern Europe, wished to join the Allies, chiefly because his keen judgment had picked them as the probable winners. King Constantine, more cautious, thought that Greece should preserve its neutrality. He had great respect for Germany's military strength, and his wife, Queen Sophie, was the sister of Kaiser Wilhelm II. In consequence of this conflict of opinion King Constantine was forced to leave the country in June, 1917. His second son, Alexander, succeeded him, and M. Venizelos wielded unchallenged power in Greece. On June 27, 1917, Greece declared war on Germany.

Venizelos's pro-Ally policy brought great rewards after the war. Greece obtained a considerable part of Thrace, almost to the gates of Constantinople, but Venizelos was encouraged to start an unfortunate offensive war against the Turks. In October, 1920, King Alexander died from the bite of a pet monkey. The elections held in November of the same year gave an overwhelming victory to the Greek royalists, and on December 19, 1920, King Constantine returned to the throne. As Venizelos felt that there was no room in Greece for two energetic men, he left the country to live in exile in western Europe.

The story of the offensive of the Greek army in Asia Minor and the complete collapse of the Greek front in 1922 is only too well known. The defeated army had to seek a scapegoat, and the victim of the wrath of the defeated soldiers was the king. Faced with a furious revolt, King Constantine left the country on September 30, 1922, and his son George became the ruler of Greece. He was, however, ruler only in name. The real master, Colonel Plastiras, haled all the monarchist leaders before a special tribunal and secured their conviction; in the early morning of November 28, 1923, ex-Premiers Gounaris and Protopapadakis, General Hadjianestis, the commander of the defeated army, and two other royalist ministers were executed. A royalist putsch, led by General Metaxas, was quickly suppressed, and on December 19, 1923, the king had to go into exile at Bucharest. On March 25, 1924, the republic was proclaimed in Greece. Though only four years before an overwhelming vote had been given to the royalists, the plebiscite held on April 13, 1924, yielded 760,000 votes in favor of the republic against 325,000 for the kingdom.

In the early days of its existence the republic was undoubtedly popular with the greater part of the people. But it had one genetic sin: it had been born in blood. In the East the sense of revenge is strong, and memories are long. The Greek royalists have not forgotten the death of their comrades. For eight years the republic got along fairly well, especially after the return of M. Venizelos to power in 1928. With the help of an international loan a million and a half refugees from Asia Minor were settled in the country, and there was a measure of prosperity. Economic difficulties began in 1931, however, and soon the financial situation became acute. The economic crisis caused such a political upheaval that in the elections of March 5, 1933, the Populist Party of M. Tsaldaris obtained a small majority, and the great Cretan politician, Venizelos, had to yield his post as premier to his rival, Tsaldaris.

M. Venizelos was undoubtedly a genius. M. Tsaldaris is not a genius. He is a silent, indomitable worker, a shrewd lawyer with the double-sharp quick-wittedness of a Greek who is also a man of legal mind. When he came to power he immediately declared that he did not wish the return of the monarchy and that he would rule on the basis of the republican constitution. But during his two years in office he has shaken the foundations of the republic. Army officers and public servants known to be loyal to Venizelos were rapidly eliminated. The republicans became uneasy, believing that their elimination from positions of command meant that the days of the republic were numbered. The measures of the Tsaldaris government finally drove the republicans into the revolt of March, 1935. Their rebellion was defeated, and Venizelos and his friends had to take flight. Those who could not flee were arrested and their fortunes confiscated, with which measure a severe blow was dealt to the financial base of the republican movement.

The elections in May of this year showed a large majority for the government. Yet the country is still clearly divided into two camps: the Peloponnesus and the central and northern peninsulas are royalist; the new refugee settle-

* On October 10, by a military coup d'état, four bills were hurried through the Greek parliament abolishing the republic and declaring the monarchy restored under the constitution of 1911. Marshal Kondylis was named premier and regent until the King's return and the plebiscite which was to have been held on November 3 will now be merely the occasion for a vote of the people confirming what the army has established. Premier Kondylis, as the first act of his office, declared martial law and announced the creation of a new Cabinet, ignoring President Zaimis, who is considered to have been deprived of his office. Premier Tsaldaris was forced to resign, and King George, in exile in London, is reported to be awaiting the call to return to his country and his throne.—EDITORS THE NATION.

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ments in Macedonia and Thrace and the islands, including Crete, are republican. Though the extreme monarchists demand the immediate restoration of King George, Tsaldaris has decreed a formal plebiscite, to be held early in November. There is little doubt that this plebiscite will yield a majority for the royalists, especially since General Kondylis, though a former republican, has declared that he is now in favor of a restoration.

There are no major foreign political objections in the way of such a restoration. The smaller neighbors of Greece have dynastic connections with the monarchy. King George's divorced wife is the sister of King Carol of Rumania and of Dowager Queen Marie of Yugoslavia; King Peter of Yugoslavia is George's nephew. The wife of the Yugoslav Regent, Princess Olga, is a Greek princess; the wife of the Duke of Kent is a first cousin of King George of Greece. Thus the Greek dynasty is related even to the English ruling house.

In Austria also the restoration of the monarchy is a burning issue. Chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg has always been known for his outspoken monarchist sentiments; his armed organization, the Ostmärkische Sturmscharen, is ardently Catholic Clerical, and 100 per cent monarchist. Royalist propaganda has made great progress both with the peasants and with the non-Nazi city bourgeoisie, though the strong trend toward the monarchy was somewhat checked some months ago by the sudden move of the fascist Heimwehr for totalitarianism. The fascist Heimwehr is only in part legitimist; the bulk is not. Nor does the Heimwehr leader, Prince von Starhemberg, wish for a speedy restoration as he is ambitious to become regent of Austria after the expiration of President Miklas's term of office. If he can become the all-powerful master, why submit to the rule of another? Once upon a time Horthy and Hitler were also monarchists—but does either of them wish the return of the old dynasty?

The efforts of the Heimwehr to establish a totalitarian state have been weakened recently by the people's growing dissatisfaction with that organization and by the preoccupation of Mussolini, Starhemberg's master, with the Abyssinian squabble. This check to the Heimwehr has been duly exploited by the Christian Clerical wing of the government, and in July the Cabinet Council, apparently under the influence of the peasant Minister of Agriculture, Josef Reither, suddenly brought in a bill which proposed the restoration of the properties of the Hapsburg family which were confiscated in 1919. Reither and the Catholic Clericals dislike the idea of fascism, and to counteract the fascist activities of the Heimwehr resolved to push the restoration, the first step toward it being the repeal of the confiscation laws of 1919.

The repeal law will restore to the Hapsburgs the large estates of Mattinghofen, Pögstall, Spitz, Orth, Scharfenegg, Laxenburg-Vösendorf, Lainz, and Krampen, with the castles of Orth, Eckartsau, Mürsteg, Hermes Villa, and others. The law withholds, however, as state property the former imperial palaces in Vienna, Schönbrunn, Graz, Innsbruck, and Salzburg, the castles of Hetzendorf and Belvedere, and some smaller mansions. The two former imperial museums remain state property, together with the Opera House and the Burg Theater, which before the war were the private property of the emperor.

The reaction to the repeal law showed that foreign political opposition to the Austrian restoration is still formidable. The Little Entente has not changed its attitude toward the Hapsburgs. A leading article in the official *Prager Press* after the passage of the law said that it was a mistake to believe that in the face of the German danger Czecho-Slovakia regarded the Hapsburg restoration as a lesser evil than the Anschluss. The Yugoslav newspaper *Politika,* which voices the views of government circles in Belgrade, protested in a similar vein. It is erroneously believed abroad that Mussolini has been pushing the restoration in Austria as a counterpoise to German National Socialism. This is not the case. Mussolini wishes a general guaranty for the independence of Austria, and for this reason he is hastening the negotiations for a Danubian pact, but he does not want a restoration in Austria. A general guaranty, in which the Little Entente would also participate, can be attained only if the question of the Austrian restoration is postponed *ad calendas Graecas.*

Germany fell into a veritable state of hysteria when the news of the restoration of the Hapsburg properties reached Berlin. A Hapsburg emperor in Vienna would be almost a fatal blow to Nazi aspirations in Austria. Moreover, restoration of the monarchy in Austria would have strong repercussions in Catholic Bavaria and the other South German states.

In Hungary the legitimist movement suffered a serious setback after the rise to power of General Julius Gömbös. In 1921 Premier Gömbös twice resisted attempts to restore Hapsburg rule in Hungary, and he has not changed his anti-Hapsburg attitude since. Recently, however, the Premier has spoken repeatedly of the necessity of a national Magyar king, and in answer to queries from legitimist quarters he has explained that by a national king he means a ruler who is king of Hungary alone. This automatically excludes "King" Otto, though Otto will never give up his claims to the Hungarian crown.

"Who, then, is Gömbös's candidate?" ask the puzzled legitimists. When he was in the opposition and standing on the platform of a "free election of a king," Gömbös's candidate for the Hungarian throne was Archduke Albrecht, the only son of Archduke Friedrich of Hapsburg. Though Albrecht is a member of the hated Hapsburg family, Gömbös appeared to make an exception in his case because Albrecht claimed to have the blood of the last Magyar national kings in his veins, through his mother, the late Princess Isabella of Croy-Duelmen. (The last Magyar national king died in the thirteenth century.) Albrecht, however, a few years ago married Frau von Rudnay, the divorced wife of a Hungarian diplomat, and this marriage with a commoner and a Protestant appeared to kill his chances as a candidate for the Hungarian throne. It is true that Albrecht is now seeking a divorce. He petitioned the Pope to annul his marriage, but his plea was not granted. A king who divorced his wife could not be crowned by the Primate of Hungary, as the Magyar constitution demands. Thus who Gömbös's candidate is remains a puzzle. Some suspect it is an English prince; others spread rumors concerning a German Catholic prince. But all this is guesswork and Gömbös is not willing to give further information at present.

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The Russian Giant in 1935

By LOUIS FISCHER

Moscow, September 15

I HAVE just completed another Soviet journey of 5,000 miles from Leningrad down to Armenia and back to Moscow. Everywhere there is change and progress; nowhere stagnation or retrogression. More construction is going on today than in the pioneer upbuilding period of the first Five-Year Plan. Moreover, innumerable industrial units whose foundations were laid in that period or in 1933 or 1934 are beginning to produce. Among the enterprises which have been finished in 1935 or will be finished in the remaining months of this year are electric power stations with a capacity of 817,000 kilowatts, 41 mines with a capacity of 23,260,000 tons and an immediate output, in 1935, of 5,770,000 tons (compared to the total Soviet coal production of 92,000,000 tons in 1934), 1,292 oil wells, of which more than half have already come in, 23 mammoth oil refineries and cracking plants, iron and steel mills which will increase the nation's potential output by 1,790,000 tons of pig iron (10,400,000 tons were actually produced in 1934), 2,200,000 tons of steel and 1,796,000 tons of rolled steel, several score of large copper, zinc, aluminum, lead, nickel, and magnesite plants, which in some branches double the U. S. S. R.'s production, 3 mills with an output in 1935 of 16,600,000 meters of textiles and many smaller clothing factories, 2 factories producing 8,000,000 square meters of glass a year, 2 cement ovens producing 270,000 tons annually, sugar refineries, meat refrigerators, stock yards, 2 canning factories, already working, with a capacity of 25,300,000 cans and an output in 1935 of 7,000,000 cans, 2 plants opened in June capable of turning out 1,300 tons of dry milk a year, 1,740 kilometers of paved roads, 397 kilometers of new railroads, 1,990 kilometers of double tracking, 4 new railway bridges, 5,000 kilometers of track renewal and 528 kilometers of steam lines to be electrified, one plant at Nizhni Tagil producing 27,000 four-axle freight cars annually, a plant producing 50,000 tons of bridge work annually, a plant at Ufa to make 30,000 motors annually, the Lugansk works now able to produce 470 locomotives annually, dwellings with a floor space of 8,300,000 square meters, and 34 hotels. These are the "giants of 1935." In addition, hundreds of lesser establishments are rising over the face of the country. I saw many of them in the cities I visited, from railway cars, and during automobile trips. The upbuilding of the U. S. S. R., which has proceeded at an unprecedented pace since 1929, is only now acquiring its real momentum.

Most factories are well built with plenty of light and air and much garden space, but the quality of new homes is not nearly so good, and their architecture, except here and there in Kiev and Erivan, is abominable. That the Bolsheviks, however, are capable of erecting beautiful non-industrial edifices is proved by the delightful new clubhouse of the Putilov factory in Leningrad, the Moscow subway, the magnificent theater at Rostov-on-Don, several recently completed sanitariums on the Caucasian Riviera, a big block of houses in Kiev, some of the twelve new schools erected in Kiev in the last four months, and a number of the seventy-two new schools put up in Moscow in the same short period. One is impressed in all cities by newly asphalted streets, by many new parks, squares, and flower gardens, and by the tremendous number of trees which have been planted in the streets and, in double lines, four lines in the case of the ninety-kilometer Dnieperpetrovsk-Zaporozhie highway, along arterial roads.

The most significant change in the cities is the greatly improved management of industrial units. I collected data in many places on the reduced cost of production. Smooth plant operation is now common, whereas a year or two ago it was the exception. Chief Engineer Ter-Asaturov of Putilov's told me that their productivity per man had risen 25 per cent in the last year. The value of their output this year is 218,000,000 appreciated rubles as against 185,000,000 rubles in 1934; yet the number of workers has dropped from 28,000 to 25,000. Director Tolmatz of the Frazer Tool Cutting Machine in Moscow stated that the personnel was taking better care of machines and wasting less material. Frazer's and the Kharkov tractor plant, both of which I have often investigated, function better than ever, and the conveyor in the latter moves with perfect regularity. This was not the case last year. Zaporozhie, the new factory town on the left bank of the Dnieper opposite the great dam, is beginning to work as a well-coordinated whole and is consuming a much larger percentage of the station's power. The station, moreover, has just commenced to send current to the Krivoi Rog iron mines 120 kilometers away. In all these plants and at the tea factory outside Batum I saw complicated Soviet lathes which have replaced imported machines. A large new shop at the Kharkov tractor plant will instal only Soviet-made equipment. In the numerous hospitals and sanitariums which I visited the X-ray apparatus and all other intricate medical appliances came from home factories. The U. S. S. R. formerly bought large gear cutters for special engines in Germany at 500 marks apiece. Some of them, I am told, were of inferior quality. Frazer's is now satisfying all Soviet requirements in this field. A new plant in Batum is producing the machines needed for the score of tea factories under construction near that city. Kiev is building an immense factory to produce completely automatic lathes hitherto purchased abroad. The U. S. S. R. is not only making machines; on a considerable scale it is making the machines which make machines, and its technical dependence on the West is likely to taper off to next to zero in less than two years.

Soviet industries are registering valuable technological successes. The Stalingrad and Kharkov tractor plants, while continuing to work on the wheel tractor, are quickly re-equiping themselves for the manufacture of a stronger caterpillar tractor. Until recently Soviet factories borrowed and copied what Europe and America had evolved before them. Now they are forging ahead themselves. The shortage of labor is accelerating technological progress—which is as it should be. To every industrial director I interviewed I posed

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the same question, "What is your most serious problem?" and the invariable reply was, "Labor scarcity." The Red Banner Textile Mill in Leningrad has a placard on its bulletin board which begs employees to invite their friends and relatives from the village to come and take the jobs at the plant. Putilov's needs 2,000 more hands, skilled and unskilled, but cannot find them. All railway stations have too few porters. The building of a road leading out of Rostov had to stop on account of labor shortage. Every construction operation prominently displays a sign asking bricklayers, plasterers, carpenters, and so on, to apply. It is the same story throughout the entire country. Under the pressure of this circumstance two things are happening: the percentage of women in industry, even in metallurgical plants, is rising steadily, and processes are being mechanized which would otherwise continue to be done by hand. From being the most backward, the Donetz coal basin is today the most completely mechanized mining district in Europe, with the exception of some small Belgian fields. The oil fields of Baku were a bustling scene during my previous visits in 1924, 1927, and 1931. This time I saw very few people. Exploitation has been mechanized, and the only workers around are the drillers of new wells. Putilov's has introduced welding instead of riveting in the production of freight platforms and turbines because it gives a 30 per cent economy of labor and because a good welder can be trained in two months while a riveter needs six. Putilov's has been holding conferences on the mechanization of lifting and on the installation of belts, cranes, and the like, to eliminate "dirty work." Some directors are experiencing difficulty in keeping workers in their forging departments and at blast furnaces. To cope with this situation working conditions will have to be improved.

Mechanization has given a powerful impetus to the pursuit of technical studies. In many plants 60 per cent, occasionally as high as 80 per cent, of the workers take evening technical courses. Expert mechanics and engineers, too, attend continuation schools. Every factory has its inventors' club, its rationalization circles, and its production conferences. The parks of culture and rest, and summer camps for "Pioneers," notably Artek in the Crimea, have fitted out excellent workshops where boys and some girls learn science and technique while playing with toy aeroplanes, gliders, radios, telephones, telegraphs, cameras, motors, and pedal automobiles which they have made themselves. Numerous factories possess expensively equipped technical preparatory schools for youths.

Meanwhile, however, the scarcity of qualified workers and even of unskilled labor continues to perturb the authorities. I see no early solution of this problem, especially since fewer peasants are seeking work in the cities. The young generation in the agrarian collectives of course wants to get higher education and to partake of the other amenities of urban life, yet whereas private agriculture in the huge farming region of the Ukraine engaged only 44.5 per cent of the available labor supply in 1925-26, the collectives of the Ukraine now use 72 per cent, and this despite the introduction of 152,162 tractors, 11,332 combines, and 24,706 motor lorries into those collectives in the last four years. The collectives are intensifying and diversifying their work and they need more hands. Indeed, they need qualified hands, and the youth who goes to town to study frequently returns to the country to operate a machine. In Leningrad, furthermore, the press reports that old, highly skilled mechanics are taking jobs in collectives because factory working conditions displease them. Village life is becoming more attractive, and since agrarian mechanization and the organization of village industries, which have already commenced, enable the mechanic to apply his special knowledge on the farm, the competition between city and collective for the labor supply promises to grow fiercer.

This situation challenges the cities to offer more to their inhabitants. Economic compulsion thus supplements the Bolsheviks' will to raise the still low standard of living. All cities are overcrowded, and apartment accommodations are woefully inadequate. Additional houses are canceled by population growth. In Baku, for instance, floor space in dwellings was doubled between 1926 and 1935 (from 1,482,000 square meters to 3,000,000 square meters) but in the same period the population rose from 320,000 to 700,000. Moscow has a grandiose plan for its own complete reconstruction. Other cities have adopted equally ambitious schemes. Their fulfilment, however, will require at least ten years. The Soviets have solved the food problem, and except among a small handful of the declassed and disfranchised, as in Odessa, there is no privation. Prices are falling and real wages rising. But prices, especially of bread, must come down much farther. People are nicely dressed, certainly compared to a couple of years ago, and in Rostov, Kharkov, Moscow, Kiev, Nalchik, and other places the evening crowd of promenaders makes an excellent impression. In entertainment, social services, and health benefits the Soviet city surpasses any foreign town. Nevertheless, limited housing facilities will long depress the Soviet urban living level.

The peasant is not so tempted by the city as in former years when the village was so bad that it offered no counter-attraction. It would be difficult to exaggerate the metamorphosis which the Soviet village has undergone since collectivization began in 1929. The peasantry is talking and thinking in Bolshevik terms, and those persons whose wish was father to the notion that collectivization would organize the peasants for the first time in history and thereby enable them to present effective opposition to Bolshevism guessed wrong. The reverse is the case. Culture has entered the village, moreover. Numerous villages now have seven- and even ten-year schools where before the revolution they had none. The village cinema and even theater are becoming customary. A village without a children's nursery is rare. More physicians and a large number of new though primitive hospitals serve rural areas. Expectant peasant mothers receive vacation with pay from the collective before and after childbirth. This blessing, formerly granted only in cities, plus the assurance of prosperity, is raising the already high birth-rate, and I really cannot understand why the Bolsheviks are worrying about undiscoverable small families. The remarkable advance of agrarian technique reduces dependence on meteorological factors; mechanization provides maneuvering power to take advantage of favorable weather and to prevent crop destruction. Collectivization has made Russian farming a more exact science. Vernalization, or the germination of seed before planting, shortens the growing season. Fallow plowing conserves soil moisture and kills weeds. Combines reduce

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losses in harvesting. The ubiquitous agronomist is dictator in the Soviet countryside. This year's crop is excellent—in the Ukraine it is twice the 1934 yield—and wheat is already being shipped to England and other nations from Black Sea ports.

Nevertheless, the Russian village still wears the face of the ugly, unsanitary Czarist village, with its mud-walled, straw-thatched, floorless huts. The collectivized village has only had time to change its basic economy. It is building piggeries, cow barns, stables, schools, warehouses, vegetable cellars. With rare exceptions it has not yet reached the stage of home construction. But in numerous villages brick kilns and tile factories are being erected, and one sees other preparations for large-scale building activity, which should get under way within a year.

Agricultural productivity per hectare is increasing. I have a suspicion that the value of Soviet crops will this year exceed the cost of consumers' goods available for sale to the peasantry. This was the case in 1934 in the small Kabardinian-Balkarian territory, where I encountered peasants who had between 500 and 700 rubles in cash left over from last year's crop. They could not spend it because the commodities they wanted were unobtainable. This phenomenon will probably spread to much vaster sections of the country. The trouble is that the necessity of broadening the industrial base, because of the threat of war and for other reasons, has prevented the complete transfer of emphasis from heavy to light, or consumers', industries, and the volume of goods, though much greater than in 1933 and 1934, consequently still fails to meet requirements. Peasants are wearing city suits and shoes. Bicycles have invaded the farming regions. Some collectives buy automobiles. But they could buy much more. They tell one that they need metal beds, watches, urban furniture, musical instruments, better clothes. This demand will soon become a loud cry. The Soviets have broken an ancient precedent and are importing consumers' goods from Japan with part of the money realized from the sale of the Chinese Eastern Railway. They have plenty of gold and an active foreign trade balance, and I understand that they propose to import in 1935 considerable quantities of wool, cotton, coffee, cocoa, and other articles of daily use. But this welcome procedure will not end the dearth of goods. That consummation must wait upon the completion, late in 1936 and in 1937, of hundreds of light-industry factories provided for by the second Five-Year Plan.

Such is the busy Soviet continent. The whole country boils with activity. During the last six weeks I visited eleven important cities, several smaller ones like Nalchik, Dnieperpetrovsk, and Yalta, and many villages and resorts. I traveled by train, automobile, steamer, and airplane. I talked to hundreds of people in all walks of life and entered many homes, offices, and factories. On such a trip in years gone by one would have encountered many enthusiastic citizens and some disgruntled citizens. Especially the peasants would have grumbled. Peasants, particularly peasant women, are not accustomed to conceal their political sentiments. But this time there were no complaints; there was no discontent. The village tax rate this year is low, and the collectives are gratified by Moscow's cancelation of a debt of 437,529,000 rubles representing credits advanced by the state in recent years to the collectivized peasantry. The efforts of the authorities on behalf of the nation and the results of those efforts are visible to the naked eye. They bring steady improvement in the life of every man, woman, and child. The nations of the U. S. S. R. are full of loyalty, optimism, and unbounded confidence in a bright future. These feelings stem not from verbal official promises but from uninterrupted achievements and from the promise of further progress inherent in those achievements. The Soviet Union is on the way to becoming Europe's greatest economic power. The enemies of Bolshevism are guilty of a serious tactical blunder: they should not worry over Russia's shortcomings and mistakes, whether alleged or real. They should yell about its rising might. Foreign critics have consistently made the mistake of underestimating the Bolsheviks.

Correspondence

Terror in Cuba

To the Editors of The Nation:

In view of the optimistic statements periodically issued from Washington regarding the situation in Cuba, and in view also of the tacit aid and support given the Mendieta government by our embassy there, the Non-Partisan Labor Defense feels it necessary to publish the appalling facts described in a letter to us from the Comité Nacional Pro-Amnistia para los Presos Políticos y Sociales.

This is a committee set up by thirty-one Cuban trade unions and other workers' organizations to struggle against the systematic repression and terror of the Mendieta government. It writes as follows:

> After the strike last March the entire police system was mobilized for the persecution of workers' parties and trade unions. Not a single headquarters was left open. Every labor party and union was outlawed. Emergency tribunals functioned to turn arbitrary arrests into long jail sentences. Thousands of workers, students, and intellectuals, given these sketchy trials, were condemned to monstrous terms. Anyone merely suspected of having had any share whatever in the strike was punished with years of jail. Any accusation, proved or unproved, made by any police agent anxious to pile up rewards and credits, was enough, before the emergency tribunals, to condemn the accused.
>
> In Santiago de Cuba young Jaime Greinstein—tried under the name of Angulo Terry—against whom there were no concrete proofs, was ordered shot. This was done in order to terrorize and silence the protests of a people not satisfied to be the eternal sacrificial lamb. The simplest, most rudimentary civil rights—free speech, free assembly, and so on—were destroyed with guns, machetes, and inquisitorial methods.
>
> These methods are functioning still. In spite of the promulgation of a constitution and of a decree reestablishing civil rights, the reaction follows an ascending curve of refinement in the savagery of its persecution. Recently our comrade Georgina Gutierrez, member of a workers' party, died in prison after weeks of agony. Francisco Mateo Escalona, a labor leader, died of maltreatment and torture inflicted by the police. Naftalí Pernas, of the university directory, was savagely tortured after his arrest. Comrades Ramirez Cossió and Pablo Cano are ill in their cells, victims too of maltreatment and torture. A leader of the bakers' union, Crescencio Freire, was arrested during the March strike and murdered by the police. His body was discovered drilled with thirty bullets, and the reactionary press called it a "suicide." . . .
>
> In view of the forthcoming elections, the Mendieta

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government talks of amnesty, but means by it a certain kind of amnesty to some of the prisoners. Its promises extend by no means to hundreds of revolutionary militants, labor leaders, and students who fall under the so-called "gangsterism" law, devised as a weapon against the working class and its sympathizers. . . . We appeal to our friends and comrades in the United States to join with us in our demands; to protest the brutality and high-handed destruction of civil rights for which the Mendieta government is responsible; to help us, with letters, telegrams, and support, in our fight.

New York, October 2 ANITA BRENNER,
Chairman, Committee on Cuba

Angelo Herndon

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Readers of *The Nation* will be interested to know that a Joint Committee to Aid the Herndon Defense, with headquarters at 112 East Nineteenth Street, has been formed by the following defense organizations: General Defense Committee (I. W. W.), International Labor Defense, League for Industrial Democracy, League of Struggle for Negro Rights, National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners, and Non-Partisan Labor Defense. The efforts of this committee are directed to building wide support for the Herndon defense, in the belief that the case concerns not only the freedom of Herndon but the preservation of constitutional liberties.

Although the response to the work of this committee has been immediate and wide, the urgent need of further work is so great that on behalf of the Joint Committee I am writing to ask the help of your readers in the following: (1) the distribution of a factual pamphlet published by this committee (100 for $1.50; $10 a thousand) on the case of Angelo Herndon; (2) the circularization of petitions to Governor Talmadge asking for the freedom of Angelo Herndon; (3) the support of the Herndon Action Conference to be held in New York on Saturday afternoon, October 19, and of meetings sponsored by equally broad committees in other cities.

New York, October 9 MARY FOX,
Secretary-Treasurer

Sacramento Defense

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Several months ago you stated in an editorial that at the Sacramento criminal-syndicalism trial last winter a reporter for the McClatchy-owned Sacramento *Bee* slipped Attorney Albert Goldman a note "apologizing in advance for the fact that the *Bee* would distort the report of his speech to the jury." Walter P. Jones, McClatchy's editorial director, denied the incident and you stood by your guns.

Now, through his columnist, C. K., Jones squawks again. He says you are a shelter for Ananiases and "a thoroughly un-American voice from Moscow." How you got your information is your business, and I don't wonder the poor reporter now disowns the note. But I can testify to his moment of indiscreet candor. I was one who saw him slip the note to Goldman, and I read the note. You described it accurately.

While the propaganda barrage against the innocent victims of the Sacramento frame-up has not subsided, the defense is having somewhat less trouble with the banker-financed California Cavaliers, a red-baiting proto-fascist gang which helped bring pressure on the jury for convictions. Recently U. L. Trussell, SERA executive of Sacramento and president of the Cavaliers, was arrested for assaulting a Miss Vlassis on the street. In the hospital to which it was deemed wise to remove this idol of the Hearst and McClatchy chains, the sterling patriot used (I quote the Sacramento *Union*) "foul and profane language in the presence of Mrs. Trainor [the nurse]."

One more news item. The *Union* reports that "Norman Mini, former West Point cadet, convicted here early this year with seven others of criminal syndicalism, has become the center of another labor fight similar to that carried on in behalf of Tom Mooney. A defense organization known as the National Sacramento Appeal Committee has been organized." The *Union* hits the nail on the head in comparing Mini's case to Mooney's. They are both anti-union frame-ups. In Mini's case a juror has already testified under oath that he never believed in the defendant's guilt.

The officers of the new defense committee are Dr. Harry W. Laidler, chairman, Luigi Antonini, Margaret De Silver, A. J. Muste, Paul Sturm, B. C. Vladeck, vice-chairman, and myself, secretary-treasurer. The committee was constituted by the Socialist Party, I. W. W., Workers' Party, Workmen's Sick and Death Benefit Fund, and six other organizations to take over the work begun by the Non-Partisan Labor Defense in the Sacramento trial.

New York, October 1 HERBERT SOLOW

"Ich Bin Jude"

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

At least twice in recent weeks there have appeared in the press statements from prominent people which declared that no evidences of anti-Semitism could be noted in Berlin. I should like to refute these allegations by citing an incident to which my wife and I were eyewitnesses. On August 19, 1935, we were standing near Alexanderplatz station. We noticed a small crowd of people reading the obscene sections of Herr Streicher's *Der Stürmer,* which were placarded on several poles. The woman selling these papers also had stickers bearing the legend "Ich bin Jude," which she occasionally distributed. We noticed that a young man had taken one of these labels and pasted it on a bearded German Jew's back. My wife stepped forward, removed the label, and told the old man to go home. The reactions of the crowd were contradictory, only a few voicing their condemnation of my wife's act. The rest said nothing but seemed to be silently commending it.

I should like to add that I saw Streicher's venders in at least four different parts of the city, calling out *Der Stürmer* and preaching the extermination of the "Jewish plague."

New York, September 30 LOUIS FURMAN SAS

Nathan Hale

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I am engaged upon a "Documentary Life of Captain Nathan Hale, the Martyr Spy of the American Revolution," and am desirous of locating, in particular, letters to Hale and securing photographic or photostatic copies of them, by which copies in my possession may be checked. Anyone having letters to Hale or other documents will confer a great favor by communicating with me at 223 Bradley Street. I have been interested all my life in Hale's story, and bought and restored Hale's birthplace in South Coventry, Connecticut, to constitute a national shrine for him.

GEORGE DUDLEY SEYMOUR

New Haven, Conn., October 3

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Fall Book Section

Our Critics, Right or Wrong

By MARGARET MARSHALL and MARY McCARTHY

DO you remember a time when the thin, schoolmasterish form of Thornton Wilder was perched on the chilly peak of Olympus? When Louis Bromfield, that stolid male Cinderella who wrote his way from The Farm to the Algonquin, was likened to Henry James, Mrs. Wharton, and Nathaniel Hawthorne? You may recall that Will Durant's "Story of Philosophy" sold 147,000 copies, but you may well have forgotten that Harry Hansen was so bemused by its intellectual charms that he fashioned this tribute for "The Heart of Emerson's Journals," as edited by Bliss Perry: "Here is a book that deserves a place beside Will Durant's 'Story of Philosophy.' It is loaded with nuggets." Do you remember when the Sinclair Lewis of "Elmer Gantry" was being mentioned by such mighty men as Mencken in the same breath with Rabelais, when Emil Ludwig was accounted a great biographer, when Jim Tully was as good as Gorki, and it could be solemnly stated in the Boston *Post* that Vina Delmar was "the foremost literary figure of today"?

Critical tomfoolery of this sort was not peculiar to the gold-plated twenties. It is still being perpetrated. You have only to examine this week's newspapers, this week's literary and political journals, to find a dozen companion pieces to the boners of the past. You will find, moreover, that the authorship of these boners remains virtually unchanged. Oblivious of past mistakes, the critic carries on, head high, reputation untarnished, his well of superlatives not yet dry.

One of the critical names which has long since fallen into professional and perhaps even popular disrepute is that of William Lyon Phelps, the benignant seer of As I Like It, whose passion for friendly superlatives has been his undoing. But Dr. Phelps knows, if those who condescend to him pretend not to, that he is by no means alone in his field, that he has been, indeed, in more than one instance so completely out-phelpsed that he can scarcely be said to lead it.

> As I have frequently been accused of overindulgence in superlatives [wrote Dr. Phelps, back in January, 1927] I thought I would look around a bit—and I find that superlatives are also used by others who are wiser and nobler than I.
>
> Joseph Wood Krutch: Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" is "the greatest novel of our generation."
>
> H. L. Mencken on "My Antonia": "No romantic novel ever written in America is one-half so beautiful."

It is necessary to look only a little farther to discover other, more flagrant examples of the same error, examples which prove beyond question that Dr. Phelps differs only in degree from his "wiser and nobler" fellows. Consider, for instance, the careers of Mr. Thornton Wilder and Mr. Louis Bromfield, whose meager, undistinguished novels turned the greater part of the critical press into as silly a set of sycophants as ever followed a Roman noble's litter. Dr. Phelps himself liked "The Bridge of San Luis Rey." He liked it even better than another "great book" which had preceded it. He wrote:

> "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" has made an impact deeper than any novel since "The Constant Nymph." . . . Although I admired "The Constant Nymph" immensely, I think "The Bridge" a better book in every way. The style is better, the philosophy deeper, the characters more original, the sympathy for human nature more tender. . . . One hesitates to use the word genius but there is something akin to that mysterious essence in the pages of this novel. It is my firm conviction that Thornton Wilder is a star of the first magnitude. . . .

But what about the others? In how many of them will you find the sober judgment, the sense of proportion, the discriminating taste which would at once have assigned Mr. Wilder to the humble niche he now occupies? Burton Rascoe wrote in the *Bookman* with oracular certainty:

> It is on the cards that Thornton Wilder will in time be accounted one of the treasures of our literature. . . . He is almost alone in his eminence; though, perhaps, he might bow in cordial recognition to Glenway Wescott and at least nod courteously to Robert Nathan. . . . At the age of thirty he has achieved the astonishing feat of writing a classic. [He mentions "The Vicar of Wakefield," "The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard," and others, and then continues.] And, if I must say so, "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" is finer than any of them.

H. S. Canby wrote of "The Woman of Andros":

> . . . there is not one self-conscious word or superfluous phrase in the book. . . . If "The Woman of Andros" reminds me of Plato and Theocritus as I know them in English, it is because the book rests upon the old wisdom and is finished with that sincerity of art which these great predecessors knew not how to escape.

Arnold Bennett asserted that the writing of "The Bridge" "has not been surpassed in the present epoch." William Rose Benét accorded its author "the stuff of genius." But John Farrar, writing in the *Bookman,* topped him.

> Thornton Wilder [he announced] has kept away from it all and has slowly, deliberately, developed his mind and his style until, with two small books, he takes rank, in my opinion, with Henry James, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and the one or two other giants of American letters.

Clifton P. Fadiman, in the New York *Evening Post,* thus described "The Bridge": ". . . he clothes the whole conception with a modest and beautiful restraint, as in the lovely old fables of La Fontaine." "A new talent," wrote the late Lee Wilson Dodd in the *Saturday Review of Literature,* "and a very distinguished one has appeared in American letters. . . . This is lavish praise for a tale which I am grievously tempted to call a masterpiece. I would do so and be done with it, if I had not heard so many current books called masterpieces—and subsequently read them."

Isabel Paterson was one of Mr. Wilder's most devoted admirers. Of "The Bridge" she wrote: ". . . this is a little

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masterpiece, fully confirming the promise implicit in Thornton Wilder's first novel. . . . The character of Pepita is revealed . . . as by a flash of the lightning of genius." The conclusion, she finds, "strikes a note of sublime irony worthy of Anatole France. . . ." But her most ambitious tribute to Thornton Wilder was reserved for "The Angel That Troubled the Waters," a small book of little plays most of which were early Wilder. She reviewed it to the merry tune of 1,600 words in *Books;* and she not only gave expression to her unquestioning admiration for Mr. Wilder but provided a striking example of the reviewer's art:

> Fame [she wrote] grows more and more contemporary. . . . Now we cannot wait and Mr. Wilder's fame is already so widespread and well established that he can afford this act of indulgence toward his first-born. . . . The relative dates of composition afford an interesting ground for critical speculation. Inevitably they provoke close comparison to see whether the last four dialogues . . . are perceptibly better than the preceding dozen, some of which date back many years. . . . Candidly, I can perceive no heightening of quality. Yet it is absurd to maintain that Mr. Wilder's talent has not developed during the period in question. . . . [The plays] are intended to be metaphysical microcosms, presumably. Having written the phrase, I gaze at it doubtfully; I am not sure if it means anything; but let it stand—for the playlets leave me in the same mental condition.

With the big-time critics reduced to such straits by the delicate conceits of Mr. Wilder it is little wonder that Fanny Butcher, that Middle Western mystic who directs the stream of literary taste in the Chicago *Tribune,* broke down completely when "The Woman of Andros" rolled over the dam.

> "The Woman of Andros" [she wrote] is as classically beautiful, as self-sufficient, as compact, as much of the seed of beauty which breeds in each beholder whatever of art and philosophy his soul has the substance to nourish as any exquisite fragment of Greek sculpture.

It should be noted that Miss Butcher is quite as discriminating as her highbrow colleagues; like Dr. Phelps, she is merely less sophisticated.

To be sure, there were dissenting notes. Before Mr. Canby discovered Mr. Wilder, Theodore Purdy, reviewing "The Cabala," slipped this heresy into the *Saturday Review:*

> Altogether, if you care for unlikely people doing improbable things in an irresponsible manner against supernaturally picturesque backgrounds you will like the antics of Mr. Wilder's "Cabala."

Henry Hazlitt, in *The Nation,* kept his feet on the ground, although the high-pitched paeans of his fellow-critics had him worried. Of "The Woman of Andros" he wrote: "I wish I could speak of this book with more enthusiasm. . . . But somehow the novel leaves me cold." In the *New Republic* T. S. Matthews's review of "The Angel That Troubled the Waters" was irreverently headed The Publisher That Bothered Mr. Wilder.

The critical ladies and gentlemen, however, prolonged their salvo of polite applause until, in 1930, Michael Gold, with a rude proletarian gesture of disgust, put his fist through the pretty pink bubble of Mr. Wilder's world. His polemic in the *New Republic* ended with this challenge:

> Let Mr. Wilder write a book about modern America. We predict it will reveal all his fundamental silliness and superficiality, now hidden under a Greek chlamys.

Then the front-line critics began to retrench. Unfortunately for his defenders, Mr. Wilder did write a book about modern America. Burton Rascoe was puzzled. His review of "Heaven's My Destination" was hesitant, ambiguous:

> Experience and our own unregenerate nature make us suspicious of prigs like George Marvin Brush, the hero; but Wilder is careful never to disclose his hero in a hypocrisy. That is what makes the book on the whole weird. . . . Maybe George Brush is a Wilder stripped of his learning, his sophistication, and his talent.

Dr. Canby reluctantly made a strategic half-retreat. Here is his opinion of Wilder, revaluated for 1935:

> . . . a minor . . . figure, narrow in scope, . . . yet with the consecration to perfection, the conscientiousness, and the absolute excellence of, let us say, a Collins or an Addison.

The boom of Bromfield, covering much the same period, was conducted on a somewhat lower plane. It was nevertheless noisy and substantial enough to win him the Pulitzer Prize, and it did reverberate in the best critical circles.

> Mr. Bromfield paints on a large canvas but with almost unfaltering deftness.—The *New Republic.*
>
> He does indeed shrewdly appropriate . . . the "sure-fire" interests of current fiction; . . . but he insists on none of them; he interweaves them all in a glamorous flowing movement which affects me like the cantabile style in music.—Stuart Sherman in *Books.*
>
> Of American writers today only Sinclair Lewis would be capable of writing a readable novel equally long and equally thronged with living characters.—New York *Times.*
>
> Among American novelists of his years he is best fitted to write an "American Comedy" on the Balzacian plan, and it will be no more plainly realistic than was Balzac's comedy.—Ben Ray Redman in *Books.*
>
> Mr. Bromfield . . . has challenged Mrs. Wharton and Mr. Lewis, Henry James and Mr. Hawthorne, on their own ground, and for a man scarcely thirty he comes off with flying colors.—John Farrar in the *Bookman.*
>
> Louis Bromfield is the most promising of all the young Americans writing today.—John Carter in the New York *Times.*
>
> . . . in Louis Bromfield we have one of the best novelists writing in English today.—Herschel Brickell.
>
> Now there is no doubt that Louis Bromfield is *the* important American writer among the younger men and women.—Dorothea Lawrance Mann in the *Bookman.*
>
> It ["The Strange Case of Miss Annie Spragg"] reveals Mr. Bromfield clearly, as reviewers sometimes like to say in moments of human frailty, as one of the most important among American novelists.—Alice Beal Parsons in *The Nation.*

The twin pale, meteoric talents of Mr. Wilder and Mr. Bromfield were neither the first nor the last of their kind to reduce the critical world to a quivering jelly of uncritical emotion. There was the case of Margaret Kennedy, and of John Erskine, and of Hervey Allen. There will be next week or next month or next year another gassy literary balloon whose inevitable slow deflation or whose quick, pin-prick explosion will leave a stale pocket of air in the book world. The history of American criticism during the last ten years has been a history of inflations and deflations: the first, raucous, hyperbolic; the second, apologetic, face-saving, whispered. The book-buying public has, naturally, joined in the fun, sending a multitude of bad books into fifteen and sixteen editions while the publishers stood on the sidelines

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by Katherine Anne Porter

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and cheered. Yet, though the public dutifully did its part, put up the cash and read the novels, it must be remembered that it was the critics who called the turn. Literary critics who apologize for the shoddiness of their product by explaining that their writing is geared to the low mentality of the "general reader" are quibbling. It was not the man on the street who, unable clearly to express his delight in "The Woman of Andros," cried aloud that it reminded him of Theocritus; it was Dr. Henry Seidel Canby of Yale University. And now and again the public has been bright enough not to respond: a critic has called "Hardy!" or "Dostoevski!" once too often, and no readers have brought $2.50 to his rescue.

Occasions of this sort are, however, of a discouraging rarity. The public, in this respect as in every other, has been excessively gullible, but the critic who rails against the public taste is himself directly responsible for it. T. S. Eliot remarks in one of his essays that the purpose of criticism is "the elucidation of works of art and the correction of taste." Criticism in America during the past ten years has on the whole worked for the misunderstanding of works of art and the debasement of taste. The tony critics as well as the hack book reviewers have contributed to this anarchy of standards. As Burton Rascoe and Isabel Paterson are no whit better than William Lyon Phelps and Fanny Butcher, so Elmer Davis shows himself to be blood brother to the critic of the *Journal of Commerce and Finance,* who joined Mr. Davis in an admiration for "Sorrell and Son." This is the *Journal of Commerce and Finance:*

> We do not as a rule publish reviews of fiction but Mr. Deeping's book is an inspiring story of a father and son who were chums in adversity as well as when the sun of material success was shining upon them. For this reason, we recommend the story to every father who has a son, and we further recommend that every father who reads it should mark it and pass it on to his boy if he has one. It's a bully story.

And here is Mr. Davis, writing in the *Saturday Review of Literature:*

> . . . If he should happen to be the forerunner of a new movement in fiction, even the art authors, or so many of them as live on their royalties, may profitably give him some attention. . . . I believe that the popularity of "Sorrell and Son" was chiefly due to its pervasive tone. The book has guts. Compare his characters with those of Dos Passos, Huxley, Hemingway, who quit in face of life. Roland made the triumphant Saracens shake in their boots with one blast of his ivory horn. Mr. Deeping has ventured a toot on that celebrated trumpet. . . .

The only dissimilarity between the two reviews is that Mr. Davis expresses himself deviously where his fellow-traveler is forthright.

The family likeness between the great and the small will become more apparent in the next article. Important critics will be exhibited together with examples of their work; the Authors Who Write Reviews, the Provincial Critics, and the Lady Book Reviewer will have sections to themselves; and the few critics who have kept their heads, their dignity, and their humor will be placed on an honor roll for distinguished service.

[*This is the first of a series of four articles. The second will appear in the issue of November 6.*]

A Century of Mark Twain

By MARK VAN DOREN

THE quarter of a century since Mark Twain's death has done as much as any equivalent period to give us the author we now possess. The first twenty-five years of his life gave him, of course, his best subject matter—the Mississippi River, the Valley frontier. The next twenty-five years brought him to the point of understanding this material and embodying it in his two masterpieces, "Life on the Mississippi" and "Huckleberry Finn." Another twenty-five years and he had become the white figure of the legend—eccentric, funny, and upon occasion fierce. But it is only since 1910 that criticism has been busy with him in a serious way, establishing him as an artist and considering him in perspective. Albert Bigelow Paine's massive and fascinating biography, following as soon as possible after its hero's death, prepared the ground for many particular studies; and the finest of these, Van Wyck Brooks's "The Ordeal of Mark Twain," is still a center about which opinion and interpretation can whirl. The contemporaries of Mark Twain were content for the most part merely to enjoy him. Already, however, he has grown into an object of thought, a stimulus to abstraction. For better or for worse he has become the author he never quite dared to hope he would have to be.

For better, because no writer perhaps can survive very long without the aid of an articulate criticism which isolates, describes, and keeps on talking about his special quality. For worse, because the special quality of Mark Twain is unusually difficult to describe without destroying, unusually delicate under the threat of analysis. It is delicate because it is not his alone. It is the quality of a people also—his people, the American people—and if it is notorious that we bungle when we dissect the heart of a nation it should be still more obvious that we have little reason to hope for success in the business of cutting the cord between a popular writer and his race. Mark Twain was almost indissolubly attached to America, and America to him; and this is still the case. He still can be read, and is read, merely for enjoyment. So distinctly and happily so, in fact, that it is a question whether there is any better way to read him, and whether most of the criticism has not been worse than irrelevant. To say as much is not of necessity to take literally his words to Andrew Lang: "I have never tried in even one single instance to help cultivate the cultivated classes. . . . I always hunted for bigger game—the masses. I have seldom deliberately tried to instruct them, but have done my best to entertain them. To simply amuse them would have satisfied my dearest ambition at any time." Nor is it to suppose that he was thinking of himself when he dictated the

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following paragraph to Paine, pretending that it was what an Albany bookseller had said to Robert Louis Stevenson about the works of a hack named Davis:

> Nobody has heard of Davis; you may ask all round and you will see. You never see his name mentioned in print, not even in advertisements; these things are of no use to Davis, not any more than they are to the wind and the sea. You never see one of Davis's books floating on top of the United States, but put on your diving armor and get yourself lowered away down and down and down till you strike the dense region, the sunless region of eternal drudgery and starvation wages—there you will find them by the million. The man that gets that market, his fortune is made, his bread and butter are safe, for those people will never go back on him. An author may have a reputation which is confined to the surface, and lose it and become pitied, then despised, then forgotten, entirely forgotten—the frequent steps in a surface reputation. A surface reputation, however great, is always mortal, and always killable if you go at it right—with pins and needles, and quiet slow poison, not with the club and the tomahawk. But it is a different matter with the submerged reputation—down in the deep water; once a favorite there, always a favorite; once beloved, always beloved; once respected, always respected, honored, and believed in. For what the reviewer says never finds its way down into those placid deeps, nor the newspaper sneers, nor any breath of the winds of slander blowing above. Down there they never hear of these things. Their idol may be painted clay, up there at the surface, and fade and waste and crumple and blow away, there being much weather there; but down below he is gold and adamant and indestructible.

Yet both passages have their pertinence, and the second one has the additional value of perfectly illustrating what has just been said. An American is talking there, and no other kind of man. No American but would talk that way if he could—if he had, that is, the genius. Mark Twain had the genius. And the American people were first to recognize the fact. The critics were second, but it is essential to Mark Twain's reputation that millions of persons should continue capable of feeling the glory of such prose—feeling it immediately, without reflection and without recourse to the idiom of analysis.

Such prose has form, a thing Mark Twain is customarily accused of lacking. His books, as books, do lack it; they trail off, they ravel out, they are heaps of fragments. And in the long run this will doubtless work against him, since a book which does not hold together is doomed to a particularly hard battle with oblivion, there being much wind and weather there. Yet the very looseness of his structure has a certain advantage, for it means that if the good parts are indeed good they will be all the freer to separate themselves from the bad. The mortal parts will blow away in time, leaving the gold and the adamant all the more inviolable. And what are the immortal parts? They are the passages in which Mark Twain has done what he did in the dithyramb to Davis; in which he has exaggerated according to the laws of his own language and of his own people.

It is not enough to say of him that his humor consisted in exaggeration. His whole art consisted in that, and his only art. There was nothing else that he knew how to do with an absolute perfection. He did not think far, even if he thought clearly; he was often deficient in taste; he could be outrageously sentimental; he was in many respects an ignorant man, and could be in turn too proud and too apologetic about this ignorance. But whenever, as frequently happened, he got going about something, it was more than likely that he would develop the speed and the beauty and the form by which we have learned to recognize him at his height. At such moments and in such passages he was possessed by that ancient and noble thing, poetic rage. It possessed him at the same time that he controlled it for the purposes of his peculiar art. He mounted through his theme with an incredible celerity, riding the fieriest steeds known to rhetoric, and the broadest-winged—iteration, reiteration, and multiplied example. He mounted with gigantic ease and a vast naturalness, reaching the top of his subject at last and breathing the great air there with happy lungs; then suddenly descended to the ground and jogged along to the next inspiration. Or, to change the metaphor, he blew a bag up till it almost burst; at his best he did not let it burst, but tossed it lightly away and left it floating. Or, to change the metaphor once more, his prose was a river which regularly widened its banks, swelling and accelerating until there was danger that it should cease to look like a river; when it subsided and narrowed again, pulling us onward to new bays.

The story of the three matches in "Roughing It," or of Slade, or of the lost claim; the picture of Hannibal's indolence in "Life on the Mississippi," or of its animation when a steamboat lands at the wharf, or of the river itself as fearfully studied from a pilot house; the first description of Huck's father; the parody of Mrs. Eddy; the whole of "My Watch"; many an unmailed letter—any of these and a hundred other passages will serve as an illustration of what is meant. Such passages place Mark Twain against that portion of the American background where he belongs. It is not, incidentally, the portion which produces at least once each generation an Artemus Ward, a Mr. Dooley, a Will Rogers. Mark Twain could do what they do, but he never did it better than Artemus Ward, if indeed he did it as well. He was not a cracker-box philosopher, a homespun wit with the gift of sly, dry talk out of the corner of his mouth. Their forte is understatement. His was overstatement, and the tradition which supported him was the tradition of the tall tale, the mighty mendacity. Their pride is in the truths which they insinuate; his pride was in the boldness and grandeur with which he could lie. This is the finer tradition; or at any rate by doing what he did with it he has made it seem so. What he did with it was to realize all its possibilities and to prove that they were beautiful. They had seldom been actually beautiful; we can be sure that a majority of the Sellerses, both then and now, have been tiresome men who did not know when to stop or how as they went on to improve the quality of their utterance. Yet there is a deep instinct in any American which tells him that one liar may be better than another and which encourages him to listen for the perfect note. He heard it in Mark Twain and recognized a master—one who began where he did and who followed all the rules, but who somehow soared and sang; and who, furthermore, lied in a precise, a disciplined language which was so far from being ignorant of irony as almost to use that instrument as its grammar. One more example, a little-known one, must suffice. It is the letter, signed Samuel Langhorne, sent in 1871 to the New York *Tribune* proposing that a substitute be hanged in place of one Ruloff, a condemned murderer whose learning was being

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set forth in the press as remarkable. The contemporary fame of this letter is not wholly to be explained on the ground of its novelty; papers must have copied it across the country because it got going so well on the theme—not of Ruloff's learning merely, but of learning in general as the mass of men understand it:

> I am not sorry that Ruloff is to be hanged, but I am sincerely sorry that he himself has made it necessary that his vast capabilities for usefulness should be lost to the world. In this, mine and the public's is a common regret. For it is plain that in the person of Ruloff one of the most marvelous of intellects that any age has produced is about to be sacrificed, and that, too, while half of the mystery of its strange powers is yet a secret. Here is a man who has never entered the doors of a college or a university, and yet by the sheer might of his innate gifts has made himself such a colossus in abstruse learning that the ablest of our scholars are but pigmies in his presence. By the evidence of Professor Mather, Mr. Surbridge, Mr. Richmond, and other men qualified to testify, this man is as familiar with the broad domain of philology as common men are with the passing events of the day. His memory has such a limitless grasp that he is able to quote sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph, chapter after chapter, from a gnarled and knotty ancient literature that ordinary scholars are capable of achieving little more than a bowing acquaintance with. But his memory is the least of his great endowments. By the testimony of the gentlemen above referred to he is able to *critically analyze* the works of the old masters of literature, and while pointing out the beauties of the originals with a pure and discriminating taste is as quick to detect the defects of the accepted translations; and in the latter case, if exceptions be taken to his judgment, he straightway opens up the quarries of his exhaustless knowledge, and builds a very Chinese wall of evidence around his position. Every learned man who enters Ruloff's presence leaves it amazed and confounded by his prodigious capabilities and attainments. One scholar said he did not believe that in matters of subtle analysis, vast knowledge in his peculiar field of research, comprehensive grasp of subjects, and serene kingship over its limitless and bewildering details, any land or any era of modern times had given birth to Ruloff's intellectual equal. What miracles this murderer might have wrought, and what luster he might have shed upon his country, if he had not put a forfeit upon his life so foolishly!

The words "serene kingship" mark the high point here, but there has been a steady climb to them, and as always the end comes shortly after, with an abruptness both expected and prescribed.

Of course there is more to Mark Twain than this. He had a heart and a brain, and he stood in a very interesting relation to the America of his time, a relation which has been stated quite differently by Van Wyck Brooks and by Bernard DeVoto. But in the long run it may appear that his sheer literary energy, surpassed in amount by no American writer except perhaps Melville, may tell the tale most truly. Whatever the merits of our controversies about his "significance" and about what he reflected or represented, he still stands in a relation to us which will be valuable and delightful as long as we remain capable of responding to great language—the tall tale, the swelling theme. Much of him has ceased to mean what it meant fifty years ago, and his personality no longer dominates the land; nor is the same land here that he observed with such an all-seeing eye. Yet enough of it lingers—in ears born waiting for the magnificent word whenever and by whomever it may be spoken—to suggest that his reputation will be permanent. It is in this respect that he was a great writer, and it is in this sign that he will continue to conquer.

Better Than They Knew

Gilbert and Sullivan. By Hesketh Pearson. Harper and Brothers. $3.

NO doubt some men "die with all their music in them," but perhaps the weight of authority has tended rather to overemphasize the importance of the fact. Mute Miltons are not, from the very nature of the case, easy to recognize, much less to count, and the historian of the arts is more often faced with the problem set by men who managed to get out of themselves rather more than seemed to be there. Popular opinion notwithstanding, the ability to make the most out of what he has is probably more characteristic of the artist than the possession of unutterable thoughts and the vision of inexpressible beauties. Certainly, at least, the case of Gilbert and Sullivan would support the generalization. No one, I suppose, has a higher opinion of their joint work than I, but there is no denying the fact that their limitations were extraordinary. Gilbert repeats the same formula so persistently that the real marvel is that he could get as much out of it as he did, and Sullivan's music is infinitely more charming than anything except his extraordinary luck—which he did not even have the grace to recognize—could have enabled him to extract from his rather second-rate temperament. Both were in constant rebellion against their own work as well as against each other, but the evidence afforded by their independent and more ambitious efforts tends to indicate that both would have been long ago forgotten had either been left free to "express himself" in a manner suitable to what he believed his deeper nature.

Without precisely saying all this, Hesketh Pearson makes it abundantly clear in his very entertaining book about the personalities of the two men. Gilbert was, of course, the more positive personality. He was a sentimentalist to be sure, and, like the even much more inhibited Lewis Carroll, tended to allow his satiric impulse public expression only when it was more or less disguised as nonsense, but privately he was aggressive and vigorous, not to say quarrelsome. He might long to write extremely sentimental plays and might even get around actually to composing some of them, like the one in which four lovesick maidens act in all seriousness very much after the fashion of the twenty in "Patience." But he was also famous for robust and sometimes brutal *bons mots,* like his remark about a certain theatrical manager who puffed his actress-mistress in the press, "Why, the man is blowing his own strumpet," or like his conundrum on the subject of a musical-comedy actress, "Why is Miss —— like a bad photograph? Because she is underdeveloped and overexposed." Sullivan, on the other hand, had nothing except the exigencies of Gilbert's text to protect him from the grandiose sentimentalities into which his music tended to fall. He was gentle but pliable and weak, succumbing luxuriously to the flattery of fashionable people, doting on the attentions of royalty, and losing vast sums at roulette by way of consolation for the oratorios he thought he should be writing.

Notoriously the two did not like each other, and, indeed, when they last met—before the curtain at a revival—they left the theater without speaking. Sullivan thought that Gilbert's earthbound texts kept him from soaring. Gilbert, who did

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not like music and boasted that he knew only two tunes—"One of them is 'God Save the King' and the other one isn't"—thought that Sullivan's melodies merely obscured his words. But most of Gilbert's best work and all of Sullivan's was the result of the collaboration which each thought so hampering. Sullivan imposed some delicacy on Gilbert; Gilbert drew out of Sullivan the fun that otherwise remained smothered by his sentimentality. In a sense, the Savoy operas are better art than either of the collaborators was artist. It is hard to see how the two men made them. They happened—in the sense, that is to say, that the delicious irony implicit in the contrast between the burlesque of the lines and the lyricism of the melodies is often accidental rather than premeditated. Neither man had a temperament as rich or complex as the operas seem to imply.

Both were, of course, typically Victorian. Gilbert's duenna-like attitude toward the female members of his company made him a public laughing-stock; Sullivan delivered a speech in which he claimed as one of the chief honors of music that it was, unlike all the other arts, "incapable of suggesting improper thoughts." Fortunately for his own peace of mind he never lived to hear a jazz orchestra, but that is not the point. The point is that it is hard to understand how they could have indulged with such solemnity in all the currently fashionable cackle about innocence and purity and the high moral tone; how they could have failed to see that in the Savoy operas had been created something unique, which, just because it was unique and so perfect in its own way, would outlast all the simpering sentimentalities and all the fatuous high thoughts of an age to whose banalities they were so anxious to contribute. But, then, perhaps we should not wonder too much. Fifty years hence some of our own doubts about whether this play or that has enough "social significance" to be really "important" may sound just as funny.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"Race, Environment, and Time"

Literature and Society. By Albert Guérard. Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard Company. $3.

ALTHOUGH this work deals with the most widely discussed problem in current literary criticism, it is unlikely to attract a large number of readers. The title is too soberly descriptive, and its author has not had the wisdom to conceal that he is a member of the academic profession. Not only are most of us unable to forget Mr. Mencken's warning that no professor can possibly have anything worth while to say about literature, but we have been persuaded by this time that a familiarity with the classics of the past is a distinct handicap for the critic. Unlike those writers who boast in the Sunday book supplements that they have never read the "Odyssey" and "The Divine Comedy" and "Don Quixote," Professor Guérard betrays a flagrant acquaintance with half a dozen fields of European literature. He does not hesitate to trace a bad popular joke from the *Literary Digest* through Prosper Mérimée to Voltaire and from Voltaire to Fontenelle. If it is a question of the effect of autocracy on literary productivity, he can offer examples from the aristocracy of Venice, the Jesuits of Paraguay in the eighteenth century, and the French Jacobins, as well as from the Bolshevists, the Fascists, and the Nazis. And when he comes to advance his thesis that the most favorable conditions for such productivity are to be found in "the Oppressive state which fails to oppress," he is able to supply an analysis of the societies of Augustus, of Louis XIV, and of Alexander II which can only come out of a thorough knowledge of the whole social and political background of those periods. There can be no mitigation of the charge that Professor Guérard knows a great deal about the two subjects linked in his title; his generalizations are bound to offend by the very weight of the erudition behind them. Yet there will doubtless be a few readers for whom the novelty of reading such a study at the present moment will compensate for the shock to good taste involved in supporting generalizations with a wealth of relevant information.

To begin with, Professor Guérard reminds us how much of what is essential in recent sociological criticism of the more rigorous sort was anticipated by Taine in the famous preface to his history of English literature. The first and most interesting quarter of the present work is a refutation of Taine's doctrine that literature is "explainable" in terms of race, environment, and time (or the *moment*). It is of course not difficult to shatter the assumptions of nineteenth-century racial heredity by summarizing the rich confusion of twentieth-century anthropology and eugenics. Following a résumé of nationality, language, and various pseudo-scientific criteria like "marked differences in bodily structure," facial angle, and cephalic index as definitions of race, Professor Guérard concludes that cultural elements, among which he includes "the political, economic, and social regime," are of vastly more importance than race. As for Taine's conception of time, he makes it indistinguishable from environment: "*Time* adds nothing real to environment: for *environment* exists only in time." Breaking down this distinction leads, it is true, to some unnecessary remarks on the good and the bad role of tradition in literature. But it also makes possible an ampler treatment of that one of the three forces described by Taine which holds the most interest for us today—environment, which is further subdivided into climate and the economic, the political, and the social environments. After a desultory inquiry into the effects of fog and sunshine on national literature, the discussion finally gets to the point in the question to what extent the literary historian can accept economic determinism. Here Professor Guérard brings to the debate all the resources of a rich scholarship, a mellow perception of fundamental literary values, and general good sense. Admitting that the needs of food and shelter precede all other needs for the writer as for everyone else, that obviously no writer can write unless he is alive, this critic points out again that the appropriate realm of the writer is above or beyond the economic realm. In extreme cases, in the Sahara or at the North Pole, physical conditions may prevent culture from arising at all; to this extent culture is "determined." But in civilized countries the connection between material opportunities and cultural development is not always inevitable: the so-called human factor seriously disturbs the logic. Of the four economic states which are examined pragmatically, that is, from the standpoint of their actual cultural accomplishment, the commercial is found to be in all times the most congenial and therefore the richest for literature. The pastoral exists only as a sentimental or retrospective delusion; the agricultural by itself is "heavily dumb"; and the true industrial state does not yet exist. "Literature under the industrial dispensation may be no less great, but it will be different." The chapter on the political environment is the most stimulating in the book. It is here that we find the paradox that a state ruled by an "inefficient tyranny" is the most suitable for the writer. Ineffective despotism "breeds a moderate amount of discontent and therefore thought"; opposition to it creates "a sense of daring, adventure, heroism"—all attitudes appealing to the literary mind. In the last analysis what is required is a regime permitting some scope to conflict, a society which does not impose the bonds either of too great liberty or too great restraint. Professor Guérard concludes his reinterpretation of Taine with a statement which should be tacked over the desk of everyone writing on literature today: "A literary problem is not merely one with three

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unknown quantities: it is one with an unknown number of unknown quantities."

There is not room to offer a summary of the later sections on "the author as a social type," on the book-reading public, and on the future of American letters. Much in these chapters is unfortunately a condensation in print of what might better have been allowed to evaporate in the lighter air of the classroom. They deal with matters too superficial, too antiquated, or too remote to be of much interest. Only in the chapter entitled Literature in Utopia does Professor Guérard suggest a possible application of the conclusions of his earlier section to the present and the immediate future. The trouble with all Utopias, it is successfully demonstrated, is that they lead to stagnation. But "the Utopia just ahead, the dream born of protest, will save us from the slough of self-satisfaction." According to such a view literature has rarely had a more favorable opportunity for development than the present, in which a situation fertile of protest has created the hope of a Utopia still sufficiently remote not to exercise its real effects of "conformity and dulness." To be consistent with his interpretation of literary history, Professor Guérard should embrace the dream of social revolution as the only generating force capable of saving literature in a period which *does* believe that its Constitution, its economic regime, and the rest are "fundamentally and unchangeably right." Such a view would not commit him to a belief in Utopia—only to a more defined acceptance of "the Utopia just ahead," which he admits is the only kind of Utopia in which literature can flourish or even have its being.

WILLIAM TROY

The Chinese Mind

My Country and My People. By Lin Yutang. Reynal and Hitchcock. $3.

MR. LIN YUTANG, who is well known through his humorous articles in the Lün Yu (*Fortnightly Analects,* a magazine of the *New Yorker* type in China), has written among other things a brilliant analysis of the Chinese mind, its characteristics, political institutions, social customs, and achievements in art and literature. Mr. Lin has studied both in Europe and in America. He is familiar with Western cultural elements and often compares and contrasts them with those of China in "My Country and My People."

The Chinese mind, as he gives it, is nothing more than the development of his own, disciplined in the intellectual decorous traditions of Confucius, relaxing in Taoistic simplicity. In China, when a man succeeds, he is a Confucian. That is his working mood. When he fails, he is Taoistic, in a playing mood adapted to soothe his wounded soul. But when neither the moral conduct of the Confucian nor the mysterious placidity of the Taoist satisfies him, he still has the metaphysics of Buddha to fall back upon. Buddhism is the only element borrowed from abroad by the Chinese mind. And Buddhism has long been completely naturalized in China. Christianity has not—and that is one reason why it has failed to enjoy the same prestige. It is interesting to see that though Mr. Lin was brought up in a mission school, he has not accepted its salvation.

Let us picture a Chinese student, as he is drawn by Mr. Lin, coming to Western universities. He has learned that the salvation of China must be the mastery of Western knowledge. Or so he thinks. He marvels at the system that graduates a bachelor in four years, a master in one year more, and a doctor in still another two. It takes him seven years to realize that this kind of education consists of nothing but a number of sheepskins written in mysterious letters. Of course he has dutifully learned to dance, to go to vaudeville, and to yell at a football game—perhaps even to swing a golf stick. But underneath he has hated all these as mere noise and restless activity. And he has suffered the stiff dog-collars, and hungered for real Chinese meals. His intellectual horizon is far wider than that of the average American student. Finally after years of exile, nearing forty, he returns to China. What has he to show? The Western education seems to have slid off him as water from a duck. Now he cannot see how he could have endured it so long, that lack of comfortable dress, that divorce from his own delicious food, that incessant movement about things that are not important. And he feels that the poetry and painting of his forefathers suit him far better than any substitutes he has found in the West. Life begins at forty!

Such a student has felt within him the Confucian motivation of hard work; now he falls back on Taoistic laughter. Even the menace of the Japanese fails to alarm him now. He has succeeded, and failed. He is ready to accept China for better or for worse. He feels no longer a great crusading spirit for things Western, though he acknowledges the necessity for reform. Yet he has nothing startling to offer.

This is the picture Mr. Lin has given, and in it I can see many of my friends. Lin Yutang is one of the most distinguished Chinese. He knows China and the West. It is only through such a mind that the true analysis of China can be written. Much has been written on China, but mostly by foreigners who may have lived there thirty years, yet have never learned the language well, never visited in Chinese homes, never familiarized themselves with Chinese literary traditions or with Chinese food. Such a man has been satirized by Lin Yutang as "the old China hand."

As for himself, Mr. Lin sees many virtues in Confucianism, but he does not, as some do, advocate going back to it. He is against a government by gentlemen and unwritten laws. Rather than borrow more morals, he urges prisons for politicians. "What China needs is neither benevolence nor righteousness nor honor, but simple justice, and the courage to shoot those officials who are neither benevolent nor righteous nor honorable." A government such as that encouraged at the end of the third century, B. C., by Hanfeitze, the legalist, is more to his liking.

It is true that the Chinese never execute an official. An official is symbolically a gentleman, though, as Mr. Lin says, not every official can be a gentleman. A gentleman's face must be saved. Even the scholarly general of a rebel faction, if he loses, will be sent at government expense for an indefinite stay abroad in order to make some important studies and research. A gentleman, if he is sufficiently well known, may even be a Communist in China. But he runs the risk of being offered some very honorable sinecure which will effectively cut short his freedom of movement and which may, by its very advantage in money and position, betray him to the opposite camp. It is only the small fry who suffer the ignominy of execution.

Lin Yutang does not think that communism could save China. A communistic state in which the human individual is regarded as a member of a class or state rather than of a family would at once lose its attractiveness in the Confucian organism. "Against all systems as such, the human being asserts his right to exist and to seek happiness. For more important than all the political rights is man's right to happiness." Nor does he look to any other foreign *ism*. "A fascist China would have a hard time persuading the Chinese that the strength of the nation is more important than the welfare of the individual." He remarks of such foreign importations: "Even the most fast-dyed and fadeless kind lose color in a Chinese laundry and give off only a stinking laundry-steam odor. . . ."

Being unable to believe, furthermore, in another revolu-

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tion, of whatever nature, Mr. Lin contends that the salvation of China must lie with some future great leader, one who ignores the face, fate, and favor of traditional China, but who will legalize the underlying morality and discipline of the Chinese mind. Reading him, one gathers that Mr. Lin has become a conservative liberal.

"My Country and My People" is not just another book on China. It has something to say, and says it with charm and humor.

YOUNGHILL KANG

Utopia in Springfield

Vachel Lindsay. By Edgar Lee Masters. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.

THIS book is one of the most interesting and fantastic biographies in contemporary American literature. Written by Masters, who tried to reform the Middle West after his own precept—freedom from middle-class morality and sectionalism—its subject is Lindsay, who consecrated his life, even as a priest might, to building in America, and specifically in Springfield, Illinois, a spiritual Utopia.

The merest outline of Vachel Lindsay's life is fascinating, and Masters gives all the exotic data, the naive diaries and letters and Mrs. Lindsay's terrible story of her husband's growing depression and suicide. With these data Masters does very little except faithfully to chronicle details and then to argue his own, rather than Lindsay's, case. Lindsay, Masters thinks, might have been saved had he found an outlet in sex. To him Lindsay is the horrible example of the way in which the East, dominated by the Jews who cannot be Americans, ruins the native artist of the Middle West. Here, in other words, is some very illogical thinking. Nevertheless, Masters appreciated Lindsay the man and the poet, and knew all about him, and Masters alone could have written this amazing book.

Lindsay's life could, of course be reviewed as a case history. He was strongly dominated by his mother, and he did have a virgin complex. He considered himself consecrated to a great task. But Lindsay, and Masters himself for that matter, can be more fully explained on other grounds.

The facts of Lindsay's life are pretty generally known. The poet who peddled his wares from door to door, who starved until he was taken up and became the famous American minstrel and jazz singer, was so curious a figure, even in the poetic revival of 1914, that his story is familiar. What is not so well known is that Lindsay was forced always thereafter to earn his living by reciting and singing his most popular poems, and that this, in time, killed him.

As I have intimated, Lindsay can, I believe, be explained, and very fairly, in terms of his social background. Especially is this true if we allow the term social background to cover the family training to which the average child of this period, and Lindsay in particular, was subjected. America at that time was just coming into an awareness of its lack of culture; the middle class especially felt this. Vachel Lindsay, perhaps more than most children, was made to feel this American lack. His mother had wished to be an artist. Her son, therefore, was to fulfil her thwarted aspirations. Being a very religious woman, she thought that art and beauty might bring back to the commercial-minded Americans of her day the old Christian virtues. Lindsay adopted her conclusions. He did not see that in his America these virtues were on the decline. Undaunted by the contradictions between the idealism he accepted and the practical materialism of his actual world, Lindsay went through school and college and then began to study art. Having failed as an artist, he began, with the same adolescent idealism upon which he had been suckled, to prepare himself to be a poet-prophet. He read anything and everything, Occidental or Oriental, that fed his unreal dream of what his task might be. Obviously he assimilated and organized very little of what he read. Meanwhile he avoided the practical and the commercial world because he feared it. He fed his naive imagination on theories of goodness, on old legends, and on fairy lore. Lindsay was "stuck fast in yesterday." He was caught between two worlds, his mother's and his own.

Comparison may make this matter clearer. Lindsay was born about the time that Whitman died. He had many of Whitman's ideas. Like Whitman he regarded himself as poet-prophet. Like Whitman he believed in equality, justice, unity, democracy of the Jeffersonian variety. But Whitman had lived and prophesied when these ideas were within the realm of possibility—in an age of expansion. Lindsay lived in an America in which industry was reaching the stage of monopoly. Whitman had been born of sturdy peasant stock. Lindsay was born of middle-class parents just at the period when it became fairly certain that this class would reach no general flowering, build no high degree of culture, before, as a class, it was undermined. Lindsay, holding all of Whitman's ideals, lived in a world where these ideals were denied. Had he been born in Whitman's era, Lindsay might, very possibly, have chosen the career of the evangelical ministry. It would have suited him, and it was at that time a career of which society approved. Born too late, trained in an outdated idealism and individualism, given the usual poor veneer of an American education, Lindsay could do but one thing—retreat, in truth, from the very world he desired to change. He dreamed dreams and saw visions and for a time these sufficed him. But as he grew older he escaped more and more into the realm of fantasy. Like Whitman, Lindsay was a great myth-maker, but his own America had no heroes whom he could admire. He had to find them in the past or in such figures as Bryan, the belated Jeffersonian.

All his life Lindsay desired to write a Utopia. His "Golden Book of Springfield, Illinois" is his attempt. It proves that a man without political or practical knowledge cannot construct a Utopia, for in this book Lindsay is merely the propounder of riddles and the spinner of fairy tales. No wonder the citizens of Springfield thought him a little mad.

Lindsay, in fact, never matured. He remained the adolescent dreamer because he could not bear to grow up in his world. He could not fit into his society and he could not change it. Like Blake he was forced by an alien society to build his own system of symbols. But whereas Blake was truly progressive and mature, Lindsay was a chaos of forces for and against progress. He never became an integrated personality. While he was still young his imagination fused at times with certain ideas, and his finest poems were the result. A kind of Christian socialist, whose mind was charmed with the exotic, Lindsay sometimes found a theme to inspire him. But as his life went on he saw that his heroes were destroyed, that the religion he preached was unpracticed, that he himself had become a mere entertainer for the comfortable, bored middle class. Finally, knowing himself to be a failure as prophet and feeling his mind going, he took lysol.

The exuberant, individualistic, and highly didactic poets of the Middle West of this period had but little time in which to sing. The contradictions between their visions and reality were too great for them—for Lindsay, for Masters, and for Sandburg. They all had their messages which went unheeded. And soon the disillusioned, bitter, and more realistic youngsters who were to follow them appeared, better equipped and shorn of all romanticism. The romantic revival, which had, in this country, come too late, was ended and the dreams of individualistic glory Lindsay had believed in were blotted from the minds of all thinking people.

EDA LOU WALTON

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Collectivism—Under Whose Control?

Government in Business. By Stuart Chase. The Macmillan Company. $2.

IN the past Stuart Chase, in his more formal economic writings, has usually been content to expose the inefficiencies, the wastes, the injustices, and the hypocrisies of the profit system, and let it go at that. This task he has, it is true, performed more effectively, more entertainingly, and more brilliantly than any other contemporary writer. Up to the present, however, Mr. Chase has usually refused to follow his thoroughgoing diagnosis of economic ills with as thoroughgoing a prescription of how these evils might best be dealt with. He has vaguely spoken of the need for abolishing the "price system," of substituting planning for chaos, and has occasionally slapped together a few planks dealing with next steps in economic progress, in the final pages of his books. But his emphasis has been on the evils of capitalism, not on what should be done about them.

In his latest book, "Government in Business," Mr. Chase has begun the less dramatic, more controversial, more difficult, and yet more important task of constructing a bridge from a profit to a non-profit economy. With a zest and vividness that is distinctly Chasian, he has brought up to date the works on collectivism of the Shaws, the Davieses, the Thompsons, the Webbs, the L. I. D., and others, and has clearly set forth the startling trends toward public ownership and public regulation here and abroad during the last generation or so. From his watch tower at Redding he sees the government, whether we like it or not, entering almost all phases of business life. In the United States, during the pre-war days, "private enterprise could look over its great realm without a qualm. In spite of bitter criticisms by Socialists and humanitarians, the system met the pragmatic test." The war, however, led to the development of a vast network of war collectivism, a part of which persisted. Then came the new capitalism and the New Deal.

Chase describes the manner in which the New Deal has been striving to bolster up the capitalist order during the last two years with state subsidies—thus far socializing, not profits, but deficits—and brings to our attention the progress made toward public ownership. He catalogues the forces that are tending to undermine the system of private enterprise, describes the needs of the masses that can be met only by the substitution of collective for individual control, maps out the fields which, in his opinion, might be left to private initiative, calls attention to the advantages of the new type of government corporations over government departments, and discusses the problems of incentive, compensation, and management that a collectivist society will have to face.

In doing this he makes a contribution of distinct value to the whole confused problem of the relation of government to business, a contribution which no student of social trends today can with impunity ignore. The main lack in the book is in the author's failure to analyze with any degree of thoroughness the relative social advantages of various types of collectivism. To Mr. Chase the AAA's effort to subsidize scarcity is an example of collectivism no less than the government's development of electricty through its Tennessee Valley Authority, and frequently attempts at regulation are placed on a par with attempts at public ownership and management. Nor does the author analyze carefully the advantages and disadvantages of collectivism under different types of class control of the state. State ownership under a Fascist or a Nazi state is a far cry from collectivism under a democratic state. The question who controls the government is one of prime importance in any discussion of whether trends toward further state control should be encouraged or discouraged. And yet this problem is given only passing attention by the author. Mr. Chase has likewise left practically untouched the problem of democratic representation in public industry, a problem to which the guild socialists have contributed so much of value.

It is to be hoped that the whole question of the development of democratic organizations of labor in the economic and political fields as a means of advancing into the economy of abundance will receive the author's careful attention in future volumes. It is to be regretted that in setting forth his views on the subject he did not see his way clear to call greater attention to the rich literature on public ownership here and abroad. In the meantime we are grateful to him for making it clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that the "rugged individualism" of the past can never return.

HARRY W. LAIDLER

A Citation of T. S. Eliot

The Achievement of T. S. Eliot. By F. O. Matthiessen. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.25.

THE great temptation in writing of T. S. Eliot's poetry is to batten upon the frequent illuminations provided for it in his critical essays; and to this temptation Mr. Matthiessen has again and again given in. His book is a citation rather than an examination of Eliot's work, and the circulating energy—what keeps the book going and unites its effects—is Mr. Matthiessen's felt appreciation of Eliot's governing obsessions. Thus the successive crises of interpretation and judgment tend naturally without a jar to appear as unrelieved quotation. There could be no better testimony of the scope, the consistency, and the expressive persuasiveness of Eliot's work once one gives in to it, and no clearer warning, perhaps, of the intellectual necessity of not always and never entirely giving in either to Eliot himself or, now, to Mr. Matthiessen's redaction. One gives in intellectually, emotionally, with all a reader's equipment, to find out what is there, but one draws back both to see what is not there and to situate what is. However valuable Mr. Matthiessen's book is, its very method of approach prevents it from being enough.

The advantage of the method is obvious: it keeps the discussion in terms which are actually pretty much those of Eliot's work. But the disadvantage is striking: there are no tools for detachment, for setting off, for placing Eliot, as Mr. Matthiessen attempts to do, in relation to the contemporary world and the body of poetry. It is a method which leads at its worst to the distortions of a sectary rather than the developments of a disciple or the elucidations of the genuine critic.

The trouble is, I think, that Mr. Matthiessen brings Eliot's poetry to judgment without, for the most part, having passed beyond the stage of reading it. He recites his adventure and represents its exciting details, and what he recites is an illuminating account of an immersion; but that is all he actually does, and it is not the equivalent of judgment. It is better than the application of a preconcerted formula of what poetry ought and ought not to be; and it is better, as Mr. Matthiessen himself ably argues, than judging poetry by some formula of politics or religion or of some snobbery of morals; it is better because it is at least an immersion in the poetry and not an immersion of the poetry in something else—to see, perhaps, what color it turns—which is what most judgment comes to. There is a question whether judgment is possible and if possible whether it can stand. But if it is possible and if it is to stand, it must be the product of an experience beyond the best reading, an experience very like remaking the poetry it-

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self. That is why Ezra Pound was right in saying that the best criticism of Flaubert was in the novels of Henry James. Since good criticism is not all in novels and poetry, we may say, perhaps, that criticism approaches valid judgment when it remakes its object, after and in consequence of the intimacy of immersion, in generalized or intellectual terms. Thus we schedule and point the consonance of art and life. These remarks would not apply to Mr. Matthiessen were it not for his declared intention: "My one aim in this essay is to evaluate Eliot's method and achievement as an artist. . . ." That aim, with his method of citation and still dripping from immersion, Mr. Matthiessen could only partly achieve.

But if we mark that limit for his book, there is yet in it plenty of material, both that which is enlightening on the way and that which directly aids a genuine evaluation of Eliot's achievement. There can be nothing but approval of the fact that Mr. Matthiessen's approach to Eliot's poetry "is through close attention to its technique," and of the assertion that "what matters is not what a poem says, but what it *is*." Especially valuable are the chapters on "The Objective Correlative" and "The Auditory Imagination"—and these because they come nearest to the positive act of remaking the poems. For the rest, especially for the unoriented reader, the book is full of instruction for reading in the light of the two phrases just quoted.

R. P. BLACKMUR

A Novel of the New South

A Sign for Cain. By Grace Lumpkin. Lee Furman. $2.50.

"A SIGN FOR CAIN" does not disappoint the expectations which Miss Lumpkin raised in "To Make My Bread." It is, indeed, a novel which makes you feel and makes you think; and your thinking and your feeling merge to reinforce each other. There are yeast and vitality in the protest it makes, but there are also yeast and vitality in the narrative it tells, which, though long in getting under way, moves finally at top speed with the genuine pulse of life. In writing of highly contemporary matters in a small Southern town Miss Lumpkin recounts things of which all social-minded people have long been aware, but she much increases their awareness. In writing propaganda she so unanswerably reveals the need for propaganda that her book, instead of reading like a plea, reads like a vindication.

Miss Lumpkin's Southern town is not synthetic but organic. Its inhabitants, black or white, are not simply a part but also a product of the place, and react to conditions equally in terms of human character and of regional conditioning. Those who have left the town and come back to it are recognizably changed for having been away. The town itself is just what we know a reactionary Southern town can be. At the top are the Gaults. Old Colonel Gault, whose fortunes started to decline after the Civil War, is a condescending patrician toward the town and a condescending patriarch toward his black servants. One son, Charles, is a genteel rector schooled against facing facts; his other son, Jim, is an embittered wastrel and souse; his daughter Caroline, a twice-divorced New York novelist, is a highfaluting individualist. There is also the Colonel's wealthy sister Evelyn, to whom he has not spoken for years because she married a successful poor white who trampled on the high ideals of the South.

Back from the North, and ostensibly back into the Colonel's fold, comes his former servant, a young Negro named Denis, whose real purpose in returning is to organize his people. Denis is a Communist. So are two or three white people in the town. While these few go about their work, the Gaults sink farther into poverty and inertia. Then Jim Gault, while liquored up, murders his Aunt Evelyn. Denis and another young Negro are arrested and charged with the murder. They come within an ace of being lynched by an excited crowd; Denis's companion is manhandled until he signs a "confession"; and before their case can come to trial, Jim Gault, again liquored up, avenges the murder of his aunt by shooting them down.

Whatever may, in general, differentiate drama from melodrama must be ignored in any story dealing with Negroes in the South. There is very little in "A Sign for Cain" which has not had its counterpart in the newspaper headlines; there is very little which, in Miss Lumpkin's carefully planned and vigorously projected narrative, fails to seem plausible. If some of her people are fantastic, undernourished caricatures it is because there are people in Southern towns who *are* fantastic, undernourished caricatures. We know how large a part their ignorant and misguided prejudices play in the lives of a Colonel Gault, a Judge Bell, a Sheriff Harrison; we know to what extent the Southerner has mastery over the man. And because we know these things, we not only accept the complete movement of Miss Lumpkin's story toward its tragic ending, but are also aroused by it. It is in that sense that our thinking and our feeling go hand in hand, without conflict. For the real problem of this book, it should be pointed out, is the Negro problem, not the Communist problem. What happens to Denis happens to him as a Negro, not as a Communist. And if Miss Lumpkin happens to be speaking for communism too, it is as a solution of the difficulties of men like Denis, and not as a cause.

My only serious criticism of "A Sign for Cain" has to do with Jim Gault's shooting of Denis and Ficents. However sound it may be psychologically, however double-dyed an irony it serves to provide, it makes for a kind of confusion of the social issues at stake in the book. What we needed here was, in some detail, an account of Denis's and Ficents's trial, even though we may have foreseen its outcome. In that way we should have had, socially, a more significant indictment; we should have witnessed *legal* injustice in the South, which is something even more heinous, and a great deal more terrifying, than private villainies or caste behavior. But except for that, here is a book to read and profit by. If Miss Lumpkin is not in all respects a finished writer, she is something more important—a real novelist. The force of this book, I submit, resides even more in its story-telling than in its plainly needed propaganda.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Jeffers and the Tragic Sense

Solstice and Other Poems. By Robinson Jeffers. Random House. $2.50.

MR. JEFFERS has been something of a puzzle to the critics, who have called him everything from a talented thrill-monger to a major voice comparable with Shakespeare and Homer. The difficulty has been partly that no one quite knew what all his magnificent sound and fury were about; the obscurity lay not in his language—for he is easier to read than most contemporary poets—but in his intentions. This new volume should help to clarify matters. It may be considered as a summation and, in a sense, as a realization of all that he has been trying to do heretofore. Not only does it contain some of his best poetry, but it makes explicit the ideas and values upon which his work has been based and toward whose elaboration it has been tending.

"Solstice and Other Poems" contains two long poems, the title piece and At the Birth of an Age, and eighteen shorter pieces. Solstice, another tale of violence in the California

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hinterland, is what we have come to regard as the typical Jeffers poem. Again the author makes use of a Greek theme, this time the Medea story. The protagonist, the newly divorced wife of a rancher, kills her children when their father, to whom they have been awarded by the court, comes to take them away and to turn her out of their home. Mr. Jeffers parallels the Greek story so closely that the question inevitably arises: Why has he seen fit to retell it?

When a poet works over an old plot, he usually has something to add, whether it be a new insight into the motivation of characters or an oblique judgment on contemporary society. Nothing really significant, one feels, has happened to the minds of these people in the course of twenty-four centuries. The poet could have taken his plot from a tabloid just as easily as from a Greek play; the behavior patterns of his characters are as plausible today as they were in the fifth century B. C. But to change the scene from Corinth to the Carmel coast, and to have Medea carry away the murdered children in an old automobile instead of a winged chariot would hardly be sufficient reason for recasting the story; it would be about like putting Hamlet in plus fours. There are, indeed, elements of social criticism, of the obvious sort, in Mr. Jeffers's version. The divorce courts are criticized by implication, and the mother gives as a motive, or a pretext, for her act that she wishes to save the children from the stereotyped life of her husband's city. But such elements are not prominent enough to constitute the main point, and there is less of them than in Euripides.

When this poem is read together with the rest of the volume, it becomes apparent that Mr. Jeffers's point is not a criticism of our institutions; it is not even, primarily, to state the recurrence of a universal pattern. What he wishes to state is not so much a recurrence as a reversion. The emotions of his characters are simpler, fiercer, and more direct than those of the Greek characters. Madrone Bothwell hesitates less, and makes less attempt to justify herself, than Medea, who was, it must be remembered, not only a barbarian but a witch. Mr. Jeffers, a behaviorist, is more objective than the Greeks. He returns not to the Age of Pericles but to the Age of Saturn. Rather than decadent Greeks, as they have been called, his characters are primitive Greeks.

The place which this primitivism occupies in the general context of his thought is shown by the longer and more important poem, At the Birth of an Age, and its preface. While disclaiming the role of prophet, Mr. Jeffers sets down certain thoughts which came to him as he was writing the poem and which "added themselves to the thought of the poem." We are, he believes, passing over the summit of the age in which we live, the Christian age. "Its civilization is the greatest, but also the most bewildered and the most self-contradictory, the least integrated, in some phases the most ignoble, that has ever existed. All these qualities, together with the characteristic restlessness of the age, its energy, its extremes of hope and fear, its passion for discovery, I think, are bred from the tension between its two poles, of Western blood and superimposed Oriental religion." The greater part of the poem dramatizes the conflict between the two factors of the Christian or modern spirit in a story taken from the close of the Nibelung Saga, written about the beginning of the era. Gudrun has married Attila the Hun in order to gain the power to revenge herself on her brothers Gunnar and Hoegni for their murder of her first husband, Sigurd. Having been subjected to Christian influences, she is no longer the pure child of the forest, and she relents and tries to save her brothers—only, however, after her vacillations have caused their death and that of her younger brother, Carling, whom she loves. Because of the conflicting tendencies within her, she has wrought "neither justice nor mercy."

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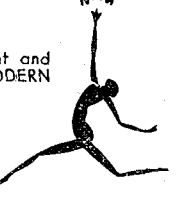

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The tension between the two poles of the modern spirit, according to Mr. Jeffers, is beginning to weaken, as Christian faith dissolves into humanitarian ethics, which takes the forms of philanthropy, liberalism, socialism, and communism. The last third of the poem charts its dissolution, as the figure of the Christ fades and gives place to the Hanged God, identified with Woden, Prometheus, and young Carling of the story. This divinity pronounces a message of doom for our culture; neither the "gnomes of the chaste machines" nor the "scared rich" can save us. Mr. Jeffers not only foresees this decline; he welcomes it. Our civilization is impelled by the pursuit of happiness, which he equates with mechanical toys and physical comforts. But value, and especially the supreme value, tragedy, resides in the "shining pain"; and if we do not have it we must seek it:

> . . . We think
> there's a great wisdom in pain that's hidden from the happy.
> Woden's our God of Gods and no power could hurt him:
> then he could hurt himself to learn it.

Hence Mr. Jeffers's primitivism: he admires the primitive and the modern who is reverting to the primitive because they are integrated and because they suffer and inflict pain.

Mr. Jeffers's ideas, some would say, have little bearing on the merit of his poems, and should be noted only to pass on. But it is hard to adopt such an attitude of detachment when one recalls that Herr Hitler, too, worships Woden, and that he has given us the most fervent eulogies on the nobility of suffering delivered in our time. These lines, likewise, are good fascism:

> I can understand the guns and the airplanes,
> But the other conveniences leave me cold.

(Mr. Jeffers professes, however, to be a liberal, preferring the word "independence" to "en masse," and praising freedom, which is "poor and laborious.") When one goes on to learn that the poet prefers "blind war" to the "economics of the new abundance," and to read of the "dignity" of famine and the "tragic beauty" of rearmament, an attempt at a purely aesthetic evaluation of Mr. Jeffers's work would seem intolerable.

But his aesthetic will as little bear examination as his philosophy of history. His conception of the tragic sense of life is certainly not Hellenic, and it is not even "primitive." For primitive man subjected himself to a painful ordeal not as an end in itself but as a means of disciplining himself for the inescapable hardships of his life and of obtaining, through magical processes, certain desired practical results. And for the great classical writers, modern as well as Greek, tragedy lay not in the repudiation of happiness but in the failure, through some irreconcilable duality either in the human will or in the universe, to attain it. It is ironical that in the story of Gudrun alone of his dramatic poems has Mr. Jeffers written tragedy in the classical sense, and this despite his explicit intention. In the others he has given us the romantic substitute for tragedy, the terror without the pity. Mr. Jeffers himself may be considered a phenomenon of the Christian decadence; his lust for pain traces its descent to that perverted form of medieval asceticism which indulged in flagellation for its masochistic pleasures and not for the purification of the soul.

These matters are far from irrelevant to the question of Mr. Jeffers's stature as an artist, for shallow thinking usually results in tawdry emotions. It is only necessary, for example, to point to his frequent use of the theatrical symbol of the hawk and the hawk-faced man. Mr. Jeffers's range is broad but his focus is narrow, and the universality of understanding to be found in great poetry is absent. His technical equipment, while considerable, has, I think, been overrated, for there is flabbiness as well as power in those long rhythms, and he often requires shrapnel for an effect that another poet would achieve with a rifle or a dart. These things said, it remains undeniable that Mr. Jeffers is one of the bulkiest figures of his time. His vision of life commands respect for its vigor and its unity. In his perception of the decline of an old culture there is a grandeur which is not invalidated by his failure to detect the stirrings of a new. And he is, above all, a superb story-teller.

PHILIP BLAIR RICE

Karl Radek

Portraits and Pamphlets. By Karl Radek. With an Introduction by A. J. Cummings and Notes by Alec Brown. Robert M. McBride and Company. $2.50.

"PORTRAITS AND PAMPHLETS" is the first of Karl Radek's books to find mercy in the eyes of American publishers. Periodicals in this country, foremost among them *Foreign Affairs,* occasionally gave space to his brilliant essays on the passing scene. The readers of radical literature were fairly familiar with his works from not always skilful translations in Communist pamphlets and the Communist press. The public at large knew Radek as one of the most frequently quoted of Russian publicists. Of the genius of his more profound works, of his extraordinary knowledge of the cultural as well as the political backgrounds of the great and small nations of Europe, of his ability to read, speak, and write in half a dozen languages with equal fluency, they knew little or nothing.

How times change! In September, 1928, I received a letter from Karl Radek, who was then in exile in Tomsk, Siberia, in expiation of his Trotzkyist sins. Mrs. Radek, he wrote, was sending me from Moscow the manuscript of a series of essays entitled "Portraits and Pamphlets" which he hoped I would be able to place with some reputable American publishing firm. Radek was at that time in serious financial straits. His wife had returned to Moscow from her voluntary exile to earn a few rubles for herself and her husband. A sizable advance on his book would make it possible for him to concentrate on an ambitious treatise on Lenin's life and contribution to the Russian (Bolshevist) Revolution. The manuscript never arrived. I went from publisher to publisher nevertheless, in the vain hope that I might find one so unbusinesslike as to advance fifteen hundred to two thousand dollars toward the projected work. Needless to say I found no takers. They had no confidence in Radek's ability to get mail, particularly a bulky manuscript, past the eye of the watchful Russian censor. One or two even doubted that the merciless critic of the Stalin regime would remain alive long enough to produce the promised work.

All this somewhat mitigated my appreciation of "Stalin," the first of the sixteen pen pictures which make up his "Portraits and Pamphlets." No Nazi biographer could speak of his *Führer* with greater respect for his ability and achievements than Karl Radek of the Stalin of January, 1934. Is it really the ruthless satirist, the rebel Trotzkyist of yore, who writes this appreciation of the Russian leader?

> On Lenin's Mausoleum, surrounded by his immediate comrades in arms—Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Kalinin, and Orjonikidze—stood Stalin in his gray soldier's great-coat. His calm eyes gazed thoughtfully on the hundreds of thousands of proletarians marching past Lenin's tomb with the firm step of shock troops, future conquerors of the capitalist world. He knew that he had fulfilled the vow he had uttered ten years before at Lenin's grave. And all the toilers of the U. S. S. R. and—what is more—the world revolutionary proletariat knew this too. And toward that compact, calm, rocky figure of our leader

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> Stalin rolled the vast waves of love and confidence of the masses marching by, firm in knowledge that there, on Lenin's tomb, stood the general staff of the coming victorious world revolution. . . .

For all that, this chapter is the most valuable of the collection. Beyond its appreciation of Stalin the man and leader, it gives us a brilliant exposition of the theory of Stalinism in the later phase of the Russian Revolution. It clarifies the somewhat hazy conception of the outsider concerning the exact significance of the various "right" and "left" deviations. It explains the meaning of Trotzky's theory of the "permanent revolution" as opposed to Stalin's concept of "socialism in one country." It gives the inquiring reader a working concept of the difference between fascist and proletarian dictatorship. It presents the peasant-worker controversy and the attitude of the various revolutionary groups to the peasant question with something less than absolute historical accuracy. Read this chapter twice, but with mental reservations. Then make it your business to get the other side.

No one can write a series of biographies without betraying something of his own intellectual past. Paul Scheffer, author of a recent work on the Soviet Union, editor of the coordinated *Berliner Tageblatt,* and for years Moscow and American correspondent for that publication, once assured me that Radek joined the opposition more out of his intimate personal friendship for Trotzky than out of real conviction. Knowing this the reader cannot shake off the uncomfortable feeling of resentment that the author should feel it necessary to administer a gratuitous kick to the "dead" lion. Phrases such as "Trotzky, by proving for the benefit of imperialism, which was preparing to attack the U. S. S. R., . . ." and "despite all his 'left' phrases his standpoint did not differ in any way from that of the Dans and Scheidemanns . . ." a greater delicacy would have left to others. No one knows better than Radek how untrue it is to say: "Like the whole of the Second International, Trotzky, the Menshevik, capitulated before imperialism. As the second round of revolutions and wars began, he made his report to international capitalism: 'Your realm stands firm, socialism is a Utopia.'" In the same category belong the statement that "Stalin organized the Red Army from below," and the insistence that Stalin was not responsible for the mistakes made in the treatment of the Russian peasant.

A real treat is in store for the gourmet who appreciates fine political fare. The chapters on Woodrow Wilson, Friedrich Ebert, and Lloyd George are a delightful contribution to satirical literature. This is Radek at his truest and best, the merciless satirist, the penetrating mind whose scientific earnestness cannot quite conceal the keen delight he takes in his rapier-like thrusts against a political adversary. Still another Radek, the Polish sentimentalist, whose existence this cynic has always managed to conceal under a harsh outer coat of acerbity, makes his appearance in the chapters which deal with Felix Dzershinsky, the founder and director of the Cheka, whose Polish origin struck a responsive chord in his own Polish heart. There is tenderness and deep feeling in his story of the gifted writer Clarissa Reissner, who until her too early death a few years ago brought brightness and sweetness into the life of the hard-hitting young Polish Jew who had won his literary spurs as revolutionary journalist in the German, Swiss, Polish, and Russian labor movements.

The reader will be deeply impressed with the wide range of the author's scholarship and erudition. Certainly "Portraits and Pamphlets" is a panegyric on revolutionary socialism, the Soviet Union, and its leaders. But presenting its political convictions as it does against the rich, colorful, and often stormy background of the cultural life of our generation, what might in less skilled hands have been dry propaganda becomes a vivid intellectual achievement.

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The Wordsworths

The Early Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth (1787-1805). Arranged and Edited by Ernest de Selincourt. Oxford University Press. $8.75.

THIS is the first of three volumes which will contain all the letters so far discovered in one of the most famous brother-and-sister relationships in literature. The first volume brings William and Dorothy together in the cottage at Grasmere where they spent perhaps the happiest years of their lives, and certainly for William the most productive. They were the early years of William's marriage to Mary Hutchinson, during which his two oldest children were born. Coleridge was still a dearly beloved friend. The famous debt from the Lonsdale family had not yet actually been paid, and the Wordsworth finances were precarious, necessitating, indeed, the most frugal manner of living. And William was busy pacing the country lanes and muttering poetry to himself, the best poetry he was to write in a long lifetime of literary production.

Dorothy's letters begin with schoolgirlish epistles to Jane Pollard, in whose family she had been brought up. They are taken up with ordinary missish chitchat, with lengthy apologies for not having written sooner, but they are full of the devotion to her brothers, particularly William, which was to govern her life. Her first day dream is of a cottage in which she and William might make themselves a home. She never thinks of a husband or children; apparently she never thought very seriously of them in her life. William and William's family—for he was not equal to Dorothy's single-minded devotion—were her family, too. She nursed William's children as faithfully as if they had been her own; his wife was her sister and friend. As the years progress Dorothy's letters become more mature, but they are still family letters, letters of friendship, love, devotion, family duty, and service. She reads, she spends long hours copying William's poems for him, she is nurse, household manager, midwife, and many times cook and laundress to the household; she companions William and Coleridge on walking tours through England and Scotland.

William, if he is less occupied with family matters, shows himself, in letters to old friends or to his brothers, no less concerned and devoted a brother and family man. His letters, earlier to university friends, later to Coleridge, and still later, when his fame was beginning to grow, to certain eminent literary men or to men of wealth and position who admired him—Walter Scott, De Quincy, Sir George Beaumont, Southey—are long, full of his plans, his work, his ideas, his thoughts about the world. He never doubted that he himself as a subject would be interesting to his correspondent; he never hesitated to inclose a poem, however long, that he had just written, to elucidate an idea at length. And in the main he was right in assuming that his letters would be a pleasure to read. Occasionally his self-confidence becomes a rather priggish egotism; once at least his complacent vanity is almost tragically ridiculous, as when, writing to Sir George Beaumont on the day he learned of the death of his brother John—a brother whom actually he dearly loved—he said in the second paragraph:

> Alas! what is human life! This present moment I thought this morning would have been devoted to the pleasing employment of writing a letter to amuse you in your confinement. I had singled out several little fragments which I purposed to have transcribed from my poems . . . thinking that the perusal of them might give you a few minutes' gratification; and now I am called to this melancholy office.

Such extreme moments of forgetting that he might forget himself were, however, rare. The letters as a whole give a well-rounded picture of a man. If they do not depict a man who might have written The Prelude or the other poems by which he will be remembered as long as English poetry is read, they are, by virtue of this very fact, further reminders that what a man writes and what he is have no necessary relationship to each other.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

Studs Lonigan's World

Guillotine Party. By James T. Farrell. The Vanguard Press. $2.50.

ALMOST all Mr. Farrell's short stories deal with the milieu of the Studs Lonigan trilogy and might almost be chapters of those admirable novels. Indeed, one of the stories is, as Mr. Farrell tells us, the seed from which the cycle grew, and the whole collection seems to be made up of gleanings from the major work.

There can be no doubt of the importance of Farrell's writing. He has brilliantly exploited the theme of poverty, not primarily physical poverty—actual hunger plays small part in his books—but spiritual poverty. His people all live in what one of his few articulate characters calls "a poverty not only of mind but of spirit, even a poverty of the senses, so that they [can] scarcely even look at many things and enjoy them." Farrell's novels are perhaps more significant than Asch's and Dahlberg's because, though all deal with a similar theme, Asch and Dahlberg present individuals who are in one way or another shut out from any organized community life, whereas Farrell's characters are members of a rather self-conscious community. When we observe the defeat of his characters we also observe the deterioration of communal institutions—the family, the school, the church. The members of Studs's gang die early spiritual—and, indeed, physical—deaths because they are socially betrayed by institutions which have lost their power for good but not their power for harm.

Much of the interest of Farrell's books comes from his care to point out that his people are not done in by crude economic facts so much as by subtle social facts. Studs himself comes from a family that is (until 1929) comfortable and even prospectively wealthy. And we may assure ourselves of the rightness of Farrell's insight by contemplating, for example, the wealthy people of John O'Hara's novels, who are destroyed in much the same way, exhibiting the same incidental cruelties and sexual perversities.

What gives stature to Farrell's work is not merely that he presents the poverty of spirit but that he knows what causes it and what should take its place. He tells us that these people have no loyalty, no recognition of other egos than their own, that they drop a sick man's teeth in the gutter, leave their drunken pals to freeze in the snow, gang-shag, rape, torture the lone and defenseless, desert their gang leaders. These are the people, he is always implying, whom fascism organizes, exploiting their vices and desires, offering them power in terms of their cruelty and immaturity; and whether organized or not, he is saying, their debasement stands as a perpetual denial of the vaunt of culture and the intellect.

Yet, when the importance of Farrell's theme is understood, it is fair to ask whether he has made literature which is, in the sense in which Matthew Arnold used the word, adequate. Does it, that is, so synthesize modern life, or enough of it, as to give us emotional clarity? Admitting all that Farrell's books do, it is hard to feel that they do this.

Adequacy to modern life comes in two ways: from presenting an organized view of a scene so full and complex that it gives the reader a sense of understanding the principle behind the chaos of life—"Ulysses" is perhaps the best example

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of this; or it comes from presenting a situation in which the characters are able to act, even mistakenly, with some measure of ethical principle and free will and, by acting, to affirm the qualities essential to decent human life—and of this Malraux's "Man's Fate" is a great example.

Farrell's books are adequate in neither of these two ways. The segment of society which he presents is, as we have said, suggestive, even revelatory; but though it aids our understanding it does not sufficiently give the sense of the principle behind complexity in modern life; it is too simple, and complexity is not supplied by the introduction of the Insull débâcle or a Communist parade. Nor can Farrell's people be engaged in morally significant action, because the essence of the truth about them is that society has robbed them of principles and free will. Their action is ultimately induced by wills other than their own and it can only have elementary—however important—historical or sociological meaning. Whoever reads about these people is accepting an invitation to regard them with sympathy but always at a remove, from above looking down.

The limitations of Mr. Farrell's theme and treatment are perhaps better seen in his short stories than in his novels, for in the novels there is quasi-action in the passage of time, and the overexpansion of detail may pass for complexity. The short story, if it is not to be a mere sketch, must be the record of sharp and critical resolutions; it must turn brevity to account by using symbols; and its finest charm lies in telling more than it seems to say. But Mr. Farrell's stories tell scarcely more than the elementary fact, though they tell it sharply: a young priest loses his faith and breaks his vows; a young husband struggles to be happy in his poverty-threatened marriage; students in a parochial school are inflamed against pacifism; the Merry Clouters torture a Negro boy, then desert their leaders in a gang fight; a Greek leaves his Arcadian flocks and becomes a Marathon dancer in America. And so on with the forceful underscoring of observed facts which can never be sufficiently underscored but which, of themselves, do not make a literature adequate to modern life. Yet there is so much awareness in Mr. Farrell (his later novels exhibit it better than these stories) and so much power of growth (the superiority of the novels to the stories attests it, for most of the stories predate the best of the novels) that one can be confident that he will see this for himself.

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History of Science

A History of Science, Technology, and Philosophy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. By A. Wolf. The Macmillan Company. $7.

THIS book is packed with information much of which is difficult of access to the ordinary reader. To have brought it within a single pair of covers and to have done so in such a readable manner is a notable achievement.

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FAREWELL TO POVERTY
By MAURICE PARMELEE

Wolf has taken pains to bring together for the amusement as well as instruction of his readers. There are 316 of these, many of them rare outside of museums. Especially in the chapters on technology they are a great help to the reader's understanding of the exposition, besides being, of course, of interest in themselves.

As for the text, the author is particularly masterful in his analyses of important scientific writings, which constitute a considerable portion of the book. Leaving aside the few who are acquainted with these writings at first hand, most educated people know them in the form of hackneyed summaries, which select unscrupulously from the standpoint of contemporary interest and for that reason are far from providing a historical understanding of the works summarized. Professor Wolf seeks to give his readers an appreciation of these contributions in terms of the past situation which their authors were trying to meet. Sometimes these expositions assume some familiarity on the reader's part with the detailed subject matter of the science in question and will be of value only to specially prepared students; in most cases a reader with a fair general education can follow the entire discussion.

The book opens with a brief summary of the heritage of the two centuries under portrayal and an account of the gradual secularization of knowledge which paved the way for the rapid advance of modern science. Chapters are then devoted to the Copernican astronomy, Galileo, the early development of scientific academies and instruments, the contributions of Tycho Brahe and Kepler, and the Newtonian "synthesis" in the form of the law of universal gravitation. There follow successively chapters on mathematics, the main branches of physics, meteorology, chemistry, geology, geography, the biological sciences, and medicine. At this point a hundred pages are given to the technological advances of the period, and the volume concludes with a chapter each on psychology, the social sciences, and philosophy.

Any reviewer of a book covering such a vast amount of ground will be sure to find statements which will seem to him one-sided, or apt to suggest to the reader misleading implications. I have no doubt that Professor Wolf would have a scholarly rejoinder to objections that might be raised on the score of certain passages at which I paused. Of more concern from the critical standpoint is the nature of the author's historical scholarship. There are limitations here which are unfortunate for the kind of undertaking on which he has embarked. He is meticulous, cautious, objective, encyclopedic in dealing with the masses of detail which he has gathered, and these are difficult virtues to exemplify when one takes the whole course of scientific progress under his wing. But he has little constructive, synoptic vision of his material, nor does he bring it into unity in the mind of his reader. The things that occurred in these two centuries are just so many different things that occurred; there is no reason for them and no underlying continuity. Accordingly, the book is not strictly a history of scientific thought in the period dealt with; it is a group of rather detached historical sketches of particular branches of science, as classified and separated by a later period. The living march of the Western mind as it reaches out for new conquests during these centuries in the main escapes Professor Wolf.

I think the explanation for this absence of unity is in part to be found in the author's stereotyped anti-theological bias in his assessment of medieval thought and the meager function which he evidently assigns to philosophy. For him the sciences gradually escape into full intellectual freedom from the superstitions of theology and the hampering speculations of philosophers. I do not mean that he allows no function or validity to these latter enterprises, but that in their medieval and early modern forms they have for him no vital and illuminating continuity with the development of scientific thinking. As for

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philosophy, Professor Wolf ends his book with a chapter of forty-five pages on the speculations of the period, an isolated summary of the history of philosophy during the centuries covered. But what a glorious opportunity he had given himself to show how philosophic ideas were interwoven with the observations and experiments of the scientists he has analyzed, unifying their otherwise separate achievements and attaining integration in new directions from them! He does not see how in a complex transformation of culture one great idea after another gradually emerges in such a way that their sequence and amalgamation provide dynamic continuity in the efforts of individual thinkers. To be sure, such suggestions of unity in the thought of an age must be offered in full recognition of their liability to correction. But without them we are writing fragmentary essays, not the history of the scientific mind at its most creative period.

I say this not to detract from the honor due Professor Wolf for the monumental labor embodied in this book and for the values which it indisputably possesses. It seemed pertinent to indicate a treatise on the same theme which remains to be written.

E. A. Burtt

Librarians and Books

Living with Books. The Art of Book Selection. By Helen E. Haines. Columbia University Press. $4.

THE subtitle of this book indicates that it is primarily a manual for library-school students and for those "whose work lies with books and readers in educational or social fields or in book-trade relationship." As such it touches upon the history of publishing, book-selling, and library service; it deals with the physical make-up of books, with bibliography, reviewing, and the fine art of annotation; it devises and suggests standards by which books shall be selected; it comments upon hundreds of series, collections, and editions of ancient and modern classics and of works in every branch of the printed manifestation of man's agitated and self-important spirit.

Obviously, a lay reader must be a ferocious bibliomaniac to open such a book at all. But when he does open it, a surprise awaits him. Embedded in the utilitarian and admonitory matter that forms the skeleton of this book is a profusion of shrewd and discriminating observation, of acute and illuminating criticism, revealing a true humanist. The discussions of fiction, of the American attitude toward translations, of censorship, the pages on biography and on poetry, make one regret that Miss Haines did not make two books out of the contents of this volume—a textbook proper and a collection of essays on literature.

As might be expected, the shortcomings of the book, judged by the canons of a frequenter of great literature, are rather those of its intention than of its accomplishment. It is a fact which may be asserted without loftiness that a public library is like a gramophone shop: as the "Liebestraum" will be considered a classic by the custodians of the one, so will "The Adventures of David Grayson" by those of the other. Though Miss Haines is not a librarian, nevertheless there is a fearful lot of junk in some of her selected lists of books, in those on philosophy and religion, for example. We see here the influence of a lifelong association with librarians and their bibliographic output—which is recurrently, on each occasion, composed half of the classics and half of the "best" of the current season (Aristotle and Trine, Aristotle and Durant, Aristotle and Keyserling, Aristotle and Dimnet). However, for this wind of a civilized spirit blown through one of the social services, we should be extremely grateful.

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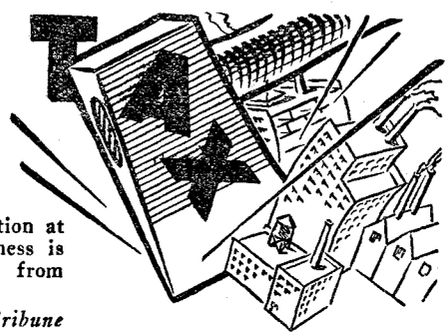

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Life of Cézanne

Paul Cézanne. By Gerstle Mack. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

GERSTLE MACK has written a thorough, dependable biography of Paul Cézanne, in which errors of previous writers are carefully checked and apocryphal stories conclusively disproved or verified. The book is so commendable a piece of research that it is to be regretted the author saw fit to ignore many of the implications of the material he unearthed.

One is not to be surprised, therefore, if after a reading of Gerstle Mack's biography Cézanne remains as much a puzzle as after a reading of Roger Fry's study of his art. Both Fry and Mack implicitly accept a dichotomy between art and life. To Fry, Cézanne remained the paradox of a classic master formed by the repression of a naturally romantic nature; to Gerstle Mack he is but an aesthetic foil to the insensitive bourgeois of the period. Beyond question Cézanne did not exaggerate the callousness of the bourgeois or, for that matter, the stupid, rigid conservatism of the official art world of his day. But to interpret Cézanne and his work in terms of his revolt against aesthetic obtuseness is to take sides in a conflict whose issues are settled and to neglect the opportunity of comprehending Cézanne through comprehension of the nature of his revolt.

Gerstle Mack neither undertakes that broader interpretation nor provides his reader with the background necessary for the task. Against such a background Cézanne would no longer appear as an unaccountable, psychopathic recluse but as the epitome of art removed from life, in which justification of painting is unconsciously sought in a hocus-pocus about "expressing nature" and "realizing a motif." Granted Cézanne's congenitally unstable, tempestuous nature and a disruptive family relation tending to keep him from normal social intercourse—a picture most adequately drawn by Gerstle Mack—one more than ever wants to know why Cézanne, completely uninterested in the vast industrial, social, and political changes and in the intellectual movements of his time, should have become the "father of modern art"—an art claimed to be organically related to modern life.

Lacking an orientation that would give a measure for selection Gerstle Mack introduces much unnecessary material. The name Marius Roux, for example, when first introduced is dismissed with the words, "they played but a small part in each other's later lives." Numerous letters and references belabor the fact that Cézanne could not remain long in any one place and that until he was forty-seven he was dependent upon his father for money.

In this extensive biography, notable for its accuracy and unique in that it is the first fully documented life of Cézanne, the author rarely rises above the factual. Yet when he does, as in his treatment of Le Père Tanguy, the gentle, old paint-maker whose shop was crammed with canvases bartered for tubes of color, he writes very movingly.

The book contains more than one hundred hitherto unpublished letters from Cézanne to Zola, Pissarro, Solari, and others; some forty well-chosen illustrations of the artist's work; a number of photographs of Cézanne and of his family; and an appendix of the artist's youthful verse. As a dignified volume on a great painter, so unlike a recent treatment of one of Cézanne's contemporaries, it will remain the one indispensable source for those who undertake to interpret the modern master.

C. Adolph Glassgold

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Lo, the Poor Liberal!

Lord Brougham. By G. T. Garratt. The Macmillan Company. $5.50.

LIKE many another nineteenth-century figure, Henry Brougham has been consistently and wilfully misrepresented. Except as the sponsor of a vehicle, the butt of Peacock's wit, and the donor of the gardens at Cannes, he is today virtually unknown. Since Brougham was in life and act not only very much a romanticist but likewise a Liberal—one might almost say, *the* Liberal in politics—it was hardly to be expected that he would find in our own sneering century a biographer willing to go against the stream of disapprobation. But Mr. Garratt's admirably written life does just that, in a manner at once self-confident, lively, and convincing. At every turn where calumny and stupidity have diminished the prestige or impugned the character of Brougham, Mr. Garratt turns up a document, a letter, a sound witness that effectually removes the imputation. The author is not for that reason a hero-worshiper. While bringing out all that Brougham did for education, the better administration of justice, the anti-slavery movement, the Reform Bill of 1832, in the teeth of prejudice, hatred, and private financial worries, he shows equally clearly the limitations of the liberal reformer working within an established party, and also the limitations of the man, occasionally blinded by ambition and led into error by versatility and overwork.

Perhaps the most vivid impression one receives from Mr. Garratt's work is a sense of the actual way in which general reform ideas have to be pushed and squeezed through the wringer of a parliamentary machine. The "mangle" is made up of jobbers, stand-patters, personal enemies of the proponents, and a cloud of theorists—all of them inseparable from any political system and a constant obstacle to change in whatever direction. Brougham's ability to maneuver his schemes

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through this clumsy engine, while keeping his own thinking broad and clear, is a lesson in statesmanship; and the author's management of detail and analogy in making that lesson plain is no less a work of art. JACQUES BARZUN

Shorter Notices

Russia Laughs. By Mikhail Zostchenko. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company. $2.

Even though these stories come out of Russia, not one of them could be described as propaganda. Zostchenko's attitude toward some of the institutions of his native land is the very reverse of reverence and points to the fact that censorship in the U. S. S. R. has reached a very tolerant stage. One cannot imagine such a collection of stories, satirizing state programs and bureaucratic blunders, being published, for example, in modern Germany. Yet Zostchenko's satire never becomes malicious; it is all in the spirit of fun, as though the author knew that certain plans and by-laws of the present regime weren't to last forever and could, having a solid purpose behind them, stand up under a little good-natured, comradely kidding. Whit Burnett, in a preface, notes a "valid kinship" between this author and Chekhov; to credit his statement, it is necessary to discount everything in Chekhov but his technical skill. Of skill Zostchenko has a great deal, but he has none of the famous insight and sensibility of his forbears—and these qualities are as necessary to comedy as they are to tragedy. Dostoevski, when he chose to be, and Chekhov himself were capable of far richer comedy than anything in "Russia Laughs." In time great literary achievements may be expected of the U. S. S. R.; at present, however, its progress must be reckoned in terms of its enormous external activity. As an antidote, as relief from pressure, there is Zostchenko's diverting joke-book.

The Sun Sets in the West. By Myron Brinig. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

In this novel Mr. Brinig proves himself to be preeminently a popularizer. That is to say, he takes his material not from life but from other writers; waters it down or dress it up, as the case requires, for public consumption, and counts on public naivete to do the rest. Even to its title—more than faintly reminiscent of that of a celebrated novel of the twenties—"The Sun Sets in the West" reads like a catalogue of literary fashions in the last two decades. There is first of all the Midwestern town which is directly in the Gopher Prairie tradition; there are the sensitive, dreamy youth who doesn't fit and the faded spinster-librarian who alone understands him. There is the aggressive clubwoman who organizes a clean-up drive and runs the prostitutes out of town; and there are the prostitutes, who are exactly like all the prostitutes whom one has ever encountered—in books. The list of dated and shop-worn themes is enormous; but there is one situation which Mr. Brinig seems to have discovered for himself in the life of our time and appropriated while it was still hot. The scene in which two Communists find themselves bruised and half-conscious on a country road after they have been taken for a ride by vigilantes is new to this type of fiction and ought to strike a welcome, if slightly incongruous, note of freshness. But freshness is no barrier to Mr. Brinig's passion for clichés; and his treatment of this scene merely goes to show how anything can become a literary stock in trade once we put our minds to it. He has, however, established a precedent; and from now on we may expect any number of novels about Communists who speak either the flowery jargon of magazine heroes or the kind of broken English which some thirty years ago used to be popular on the vaudeville stage.

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Drama

Soviet Farce

"SQUARING THE CIRCLE," the Russian farce now current at the Lyceum Theater, is said to have been acted nearly eight hundred times in Moscow alone and some fifteen thousand times in the Soviet Union as a whole. One American critic has called it the "Abie's Irish Rose" of Russia, but the comparison is highly unfortunate in some respects, however happy it may be in others. It is true that Valentine Katayev has chosen for the foundation of his piece a series of farcical situations quite as elementary and, in general outline, quite as familiar as those in Miss Nichols's masterpiece. It is, however, impossible to escape the impression that what the latter wrote out of the simplicity of her heart Katayev has concocted, not only with the full knowledge of what he was doing, but for very sly purposes of his own.

In reality "Squaring the Circle" is at least three things at once. In the first place, it is a lively, knock-about farce making simple-hearted fun of the more obvious paradoxes in Soviet life. In the second place, it is a piece which manages very adroitly to reconcile this boisterous satire with a subtly effective profession of fervent faith in the Communist enterprise. In the third place, it is also a play provided with an elusively ironic conclusion which is bound to leave the audience wondering just how deeply it is intended to cut, and which in all probability left some Soviet officials wondering whether or not the author had succeeded in putting something over on them after all. Katayev's art is not merely a weapon, it is a two edged weapon; and the skill with which he wields it is revealed in the fact that he manages somehow not to cut himself with either edge. "Squaring the Circle" is, to change the metaphor, a dance on eggs which seems to be conducted with boisterous abandon until one realizes that by some miracle none of the eggs have been broken.

Let us begin with the simple farce. Two young Communists sharing a dreary room bring home new wives unannounced. The room is divided down the center with a chalk line, but serious incompatibilities soon reveal themselves. One wife is an ardent party member full of revolutionary clichés; the other is an "undeveloped non-partisan" whose progress in Soviet society is blocked at the beginning by the fact that she will not surrender her canary. But though this refusal is ideologically unsound, she is also a home-maker whose womanly charms—plus the cutlets she manages to wangle most unethically from a relative connected with a cooperative store—irresistibly seduce the husband of the woman who reads aloud chapters from revolutionary literature instead of providing dinner. This simple situation is worked out to its inevitable conclusion by means of all the standard devices of farce, and in the course of the action there are innumerable bits of obvious but effective satire. One husband argues with his "sound" wife as to whether or not it would be ethical to socialize their neighbor's sausage in the absence of the said neighbor; the other wife, in a storm of tears, demands to know "why everything turns out unethical when it feels so ethical," and her answers in an examination provide a series of burlesque definitions: "A bourgeois is anyone who has got something somebody else wants"; "Dialectic is when two ideas don't fit and you put them together with a long argument in between."

Yet recklessly heretical as these jibes may seem, they are rendered harmless in two ways. In the first place, the author, using a device not unfamiliar in the satiric literature produced under previous autocratic governments, is careful to explain that the follies he is ridiculing are neither shared nor countenanced by those wise superiors who descend in their machines from time to time to correct the errors of over-zealous subordinates. In the second place, he writes a subtle scene, in many ways the best of the play, in which the starved husband who has just been fed by his neighbor's wife discusses with her the existence of countries where wheat is burned up and fruits dumped into the sea. "If only I were really nourished for just one week," he says, "*then* I could march." Suddenly both leap to their feet. Half in jest, half in earnest, they seize the flag and prancing about the room, chant a litany: "We would march, we would march, we would march. Thousands strong we would march, we would march, we would march, . . . to the lands where the wheat is burned and the fruits are thrown into the sea." The turn from jest to earnest is very neatly made and I can imagine a Soviet audience being suddenly brought cheering to its feet.

So much for the first two aspects of the play, but what shall we say of the conclusion? The *deus* has descended in the shape of an exalted party officer who sets everything straight by blessing the exchange of wives and explaining that Communist dialectic never breaks down—it only seems to do so when bourgeois errors have been allowed to creep in. In what other country, he asks, could such a mess as this be cleaned up so quickly; but as his eloquence grows more and more facile, there arises a haunting suspicion that the author may just possibly have his tongue in his cheek after all. "There," says the *deus* suddenly, "is the future," and points to the grotesque, blubbering figure of a child who has been all along an unnoticed member of the excited group. It is not, one must confess, a very hopeful-looking figure, this symbol of the future, but the great man grows mystical. "Tell us, Sasha," he says, "will you go on marching and building or will you destroy it all?" Dramatically he pauses for an answer, but as the child turns his silent, uncomprehending face, the lights dim and the curtain goes down.

At this moment in the performance which I saw the balcony broke out into concerted "boos." It was not, I am sure, occupied by members of the Liberty League. But why should the comrades boo a play which the homeland has taken to its heart? Do they doubt the truth of the program note which explains that the translation and adaptation do not alter the political point of view of the original play? Or are they—as on some previous occasions—merely determined to be more Catholic than the Pope? JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"Blind Alley" (Booth Theater) is the story of Public Enemy No. 1 being literally talked to death by a psychologist. The gangster comes with his moll and a couple of pals to pass twenty-four hours in what he believes is merely the modest suburban home of a harmless university professor. But the professor, a practicing psychiatrist, is more than a match for him; through three acts of fairly absorbing talk he makes the gangster disclose his nasty past, which includes all the more fancy varieties of incest (mostly mental) and murder, shows him that he can't run away from his troubles, and sends him offstage to do himself in with his own gun. The professor is well played by George Coulouris, the gangster by Roy Hargrave. The rest of the cast is only moderately competent, and the last act should have been shortened by a third. As a variation on the clever gunman of the "Petrified Forest" variety, who except for a couple of murders, is really one of nature's gentlemen, "Blind Alley" is entertaining enough. The plot is unhackneyed and the disclosure of the psychosis is interesting, although it is discovered with rather more speed than most psychoanalysts would believe possible. D. V. D.

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Films

Shakespeare Without Words

THOSE who find Max Reinhardt's production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Hollywood Theater) to be a travesty upon Shakespeare's play with the same title may derive a little comfort from history, which tells us that the piece has been travestied before, and frequently with results more lamentable than these. In 1692 even the title was changed, the poem becoming an opera called "The Fairy Queen" and much cut down from the original so as to leave time at the end for a sumptuous spectacle featuring a Chinese chorus and a dance of six monkeys; the music was by Henry Purcell. In the eighteenth century the music might be by Smith instead of Purcell, and at the whim of the producer any portion of the plot might be removed altogether—the lovers in one case, the clowns in another, Theseus and Hippolyta in a third; but the thing remained an opera, a spectacle, an extravaganza.

As late as 1816 it was still an opera, with music by Henry Bishop now and with the spectacle developed to such a splendid point that William Hazlitt, who preferred his Shakespeare straight, was inspired to write as follows:

> All that is fine in the play was lost in the representation. The spirit was evaporated, the genius was fled; but the spectacle was fine: it was that which saved the play. Oh, ye scene-shifters, ye scene-painters, ye machinists and dressmakers, ye manufacturers of moon and stars that give no light, ye musical composers, ye men in the orchestra, fiddlers and trumpeters and players on the double drum and the loud bassoon, rejoice! This is your triumph; it is not ours: and ye full-grown, well-fed, substantial, real fairies, we shall remember you: we shall believe no more in the existence of your fantastic tribe. . . . All that was good in this piece (except the scenery) was Mr. Liston's Bottom.

To translate. Oh, Mr. Reinhardt, oh, Warner Brothers, and oh, you supervisors, you adapters to the screen, you manipulators of special photographic effects, you herders of six hundred fairies through a maze of misty birches, you stringers of strong cables on which Oberon might soar with dangling legs until he disappeared above the redwoods, you ballet masters, you sound-producers, you bringer of real live owls and ravens and turtle doves and horseflesh into action, rejoice and be boastful, and sell the best seats for eleven dollars! This is your triumph; it is not Shakespeare's; and you white-limbed, well-trained, numberless gesticulating fairies, we fear we shall remember you: we fear it will be harder henceforward to believe in the felicity of your first maker. . . . All that was good in this piece (except the music by Mendelssohn) was Mr. Cagney's Bottom.

James Cagney's Bottom was good, that is to say, whenever the direction allowed it to be; whenever Mr. Cagney was left to himself and permitted to speak the lines which were written for him. Among the other clowns he overacted, probably because it had been laid down that everything in the performance must be overdone in order that we might feel ourselves present at a masterpiece. The clowns, the four lovers, the king and queen of the fairies, and Puck—the trouble lay not so much with them as with the preposterous notion that Shakespeare can be effective without words. The whole point about him is that he could produce any imaginable effect with words and with words alone. He could be funny, for instance, as these clowns with all their gymnastics and their guffaws were not; he could be light and dry and farcical, as these tempestuous lovers never were; and he could make

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possible things not so held, he could give to airy nothings a local habitation and a name, as Mr. Reinhardt's vast mechanisms completely failed to do.

There can be no objection to the splendor of this production as such. The play calls for splendor—and got it, contrary to the legend, at its first performance almost three centuries and a half ago. But one can miss the words, and miss them badly; so badly indeed as to be convinced that nothing can take their place, not even a thousand yards of billowing black gauze intended to represent the passage of night, or eighteen hundred square feet of cellophane struggling to express shimmer. Not only was the text altered and rearranged; most of it was cut out altogether, which means that the special distinction of Shakespeare's play, its poetry, was ignored. And the pity of this is profound, for more is signified than the loss of many lovely speeches. Something quite practical was lost—the capacity of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" to be effective. With the words all there, or most of them there, the cinema tricks would have been well enough, though half of them were unnecessary; lacking their magical accompaniment they merely demonstrated that the thing they were trying to do cannot be done. Shakespeare is for the ear, not the eye; to hear his fairies talk is to believe them, but merely to see them maneuver in white rayon is to know that they are studio flesh and blood.

The moral is obvious. Several more of Shakespeare's plays are coming in the movies, and we are holding our breath; but meanwhile we know that if they do not come as audible poetry—whatever else is done to them, and perhaps anything may legitimately be done to them—they cannot possibly be good.

MARK VAN DOREN

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